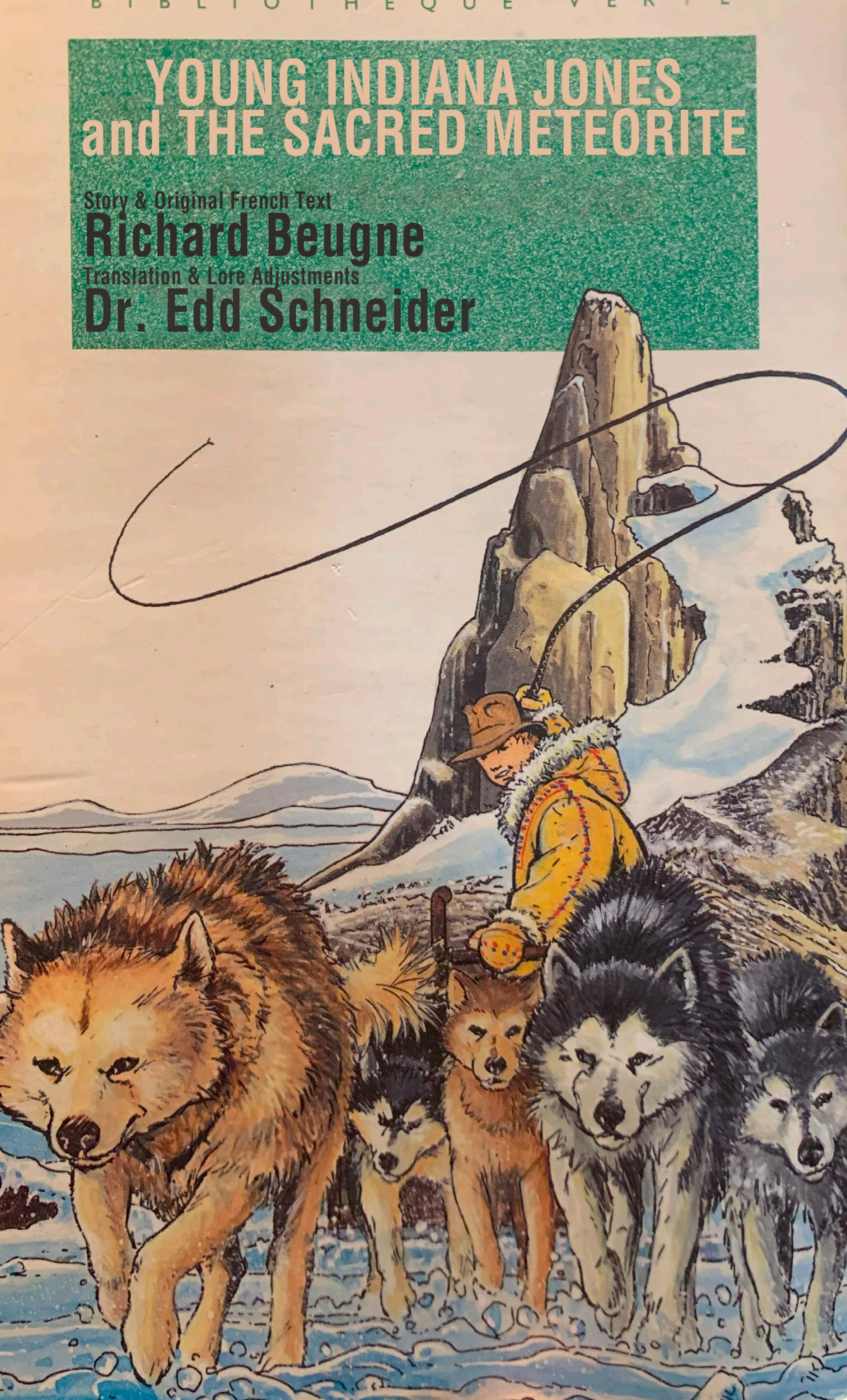
BIBLIOTHÈQUE VERTE

YOUNG INDIANA JONES and THE SACRED METEORITE

Story & Original French Text
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Translation & Lore Adjustments
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Young Indiana Jones and The Sacred Meteorite

(Indiana Jones Jr et la Météorite Sacrée)

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Chapter 1
The Shaman of the Great Cold
Early spring 1913, among the Inuits.

The interior of the igloo was barely lit by seal oil lamps, emitting an acrid smoke. Indy was staying at a nearby European settlement, not far from Inuit territory. Upon entering the dark room crowded with men, women, and children, Indiana immediately sensed the sour odor of urine used to treat hides, mixed with the smell of meat and sweat. Tanning hides always has a rough smell, no matter the culture.

That thought lead to a memory of other insides of animals on recent adventures. His father goading him into eating tripe in Paris. Watching vultures eat his horse in Colorado. This was new even to him. His senses of smell, taste and temperature were going in many directions at once.

Indiana's love of languages made him carefully consider what words really mean. One Philosopher his father knew taught at The Clarkson School in upstate New York, which was an odd choice as Clarkson is mainly Engineering. That philosopher explained to him once that the word 'technology' is about the wider process. It does not mean a gadget, if you do not know how to use the gadget it is useless. gadgets and tools are parts of technology, but the important part is the whole process.

Indiana was impressed by their technology, from skills to tools. They wasted little and worked so efficiently. No black smog, no people getting fingers snapped off in giant factory machines.

After a few seconds to adjust to the environment he stood in a dark corner and regained his composure. His silhouette, outlined against the light background of a polar bear fur, was unmistakable among the people on this trip. Only he would wear such a felt hat in this land of winds and bitter cold. So many jokes about where to keep his ears after they freeze off.

"Junior, please, take off that ridiculous hat!" The man who spoke was not his father but Adolphus Frederick Shaterton, one of Professor Jones's friends who was a subject of the Quallinat Studies Institute. Indiana was working out a joke about the more famous Sir Ernest Shackleton to shoot back but the travel exhaustion and his good sense prevented it.

To familiarize himself with the Far North and its inhabitants the boy was to spend a few weeks in the company of the noted scholarly explorer. This man, of small stature but growing reputation, seemed astronomically aged in Indy's eyes. Around forty-five years old! Over three times Indy's age.

"You know well, Junior, the Eskimos are very curious. They watch me constantly. For them, wearing something on the head inside the igloo brings bad luck," continued Adolphus. "Do you see another hat in here?"

With a sweeping glance, Indiana surveyed the gathering. The entire Inuit village was present. He thought to himself that Adolphus calling the Inuits "Eskimos" was a bit off. He had met a few locals beforehand, none called themselves that.

There were about thirty of them gathered in a room about eight meters long by five meters wide. Despite a temperature never getting more than a few degrees above freezing, the children frolicked with minimal layers of protection.

Seated on thick furs on the ground the women chatted while engaging in sewing and other skilled crafts. Standing, the men debated with such passion it seemed as if they were quarreling. Indy knew they had to be like brothers to go at it with this intensity and still function as a close society.

"You're right, Adolphus, none of them seems to been to Woolworths to buy a nightcap, let alone a spiked helmet or sombrero. But I also notice that not a single one, unlike you, has a beard! Sad to say you should probably shave your goatee," replied the boy mischievously. "Respecting culture and all."

The young Inuit woman standing between them giggled.

"Do you find that funny, Manuminiag?" the explorer exclaimed, twisting his carefully pointed red beard and broadly stated "The red beard is why they call me the Copper Mosquito, a name that means great respect in their culture. Implies persistence…." The young girl laughed, covering her mouth with her hand. "Professors from his institute asked us to watch him carefully."

Her small dark brown, slanted eyes sparkled, illuminating her gentle face. She bent forward, still laughing, and fixed her gaze on the ground between her fur-booted feet.

Accompanying his words with gestures that

amplified Manuminiag's amusement, Indy declared,

"Well done, dear Adolphus! You're as funny as Brick and Grock, the two famous clowns I had the chance to see in Paris..."

But Adolphus's roar interrupted him.

"Arrr! Enough, Junior!" The scholar couldn't bear mockery about his appearance in general, he meticulously groomed his image both physically and in story as an intrepid explorer. Indiana knew this and delighted in provoking him.

All eyes turned to the explorer. He blushed. Exchanging glances, the Inuits exchanged low voices while Adolphus tried to shrink away.

He breathed a sigh of relief when the drum began to sound:

"Bong! Bong! Bong!"

The vibrations of the taut skin diverted the attention of all Inuits. They emanated from behind a curtain-like hanging. Almost immediately, a deep voice began a strange chant.

It was a melody repeating the same sound,

" Kausek Nilik Tipak! Kausek Nilik Tipak! Kausek Nilik Tipak! Nilik Tipak! "

The expressions of the men, women, and children changed. Very solemnly, they formed a semicircle. The oil lamps had been extinguished, except for one emitting a green light.

Relieved not to be the focus of everyone's attention anymore, Adolphus leaned toward Indiana and whispered in his ear:

"The ceremony is about to begin. We're very fortunate, Junior: usually no Westerner is allowed to



witness it."

"I know," the young adventurer whispered back, "it's a great honor to have been invited, you've already told me a hundred times."

"But you don't seem to believe it," Manuminiaq replied mockingly. "Yet you're the first kratounats to attend a ceremony like this. My uncle Kuluk, the shaman, wanted it because the situation is very concerning. He believes that all forces must unite to fight against the grave danger that threatens us. Even those of foreigners."

Indy wondered what a "kratonaut" was. Best to ask later.

Behind the curtain, the turkey drum beats and the chant intensified.

Seated cross-legged, eyes closed, the Inuits remained as still and upright as candles. They resumed in unison:

"Qallunaanik! Qallunaat! Qallunaanik! Qallunaat!" Only their mouths moved in the center of their deeply lined faces. "Qallunaat!"

The heavy fur curtain began to tremble, then to shake like a sail whipped by gusty wind. Their drums became frantic.

"What's going to happen?" the young American whispered. "Why is Kuluk staying behind the curtain?"

"He's focusing to communicate with the Spirits," explained Adolphus. "He alone can understand their language and speak to them. For that, he was initiated from a very young age."

"Initiated, meaning?" asked Indy.

"It means an old shaman taught him how to become a shaman himself."

Those men are both priests and doctors. They possess great powers. They can heal illnesses, predict the weather, or fight against evil spirits. It is said that they can also leave their bodies to journey to the land of the Dead."

A mixture of herbs with an enchanting fragrance unlike anything Indy had ever smelled before was lit into a smoldering fire. The chant accompanied by the beat of the drum perfectly, the rhythm filled the room. With half-closed eyes all the Inuitss became increasingly focused.

Raising his voice to be heard, Adolphus Frederick Shaterton continued, "In the most difficult cases, the shaman may seek assistance from someone else. For that, he gives them sacred objects."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed the boy. "I'm not sure my father would believe such nonsense, but this kind of adventure must be fascinating. You can always dream, Junior. Unfortunately..."
Very abruptly, Manuminiag interrupted their chatter, "Be silent! You're preventing the Spirits from coming!"

She was visibly displeased with the attitude of the two kratounats. And she was right because they lacked the most basic respect. What would people say if Inuits started chatting in a church during mass? Surely, they would be called savages throughout the after-church social events.

Adolphus and Indiana read the room and obeyed without protest.

They had been silent for barely five minutes when moans and groans were heard. Behind the curtain, Kuluk seemed to be suffering greatly. Suddenly, he let out shrill cries, as if he were being tortured.

"Kuluk's Spirit has left his body," Manuminiag indicated, softened.

At that moment, someone drew aside the fur separating them and Kuluk appeared. He wore a wolf's head covering his back. But the most impressive thing was his single eye, which shone intensely, while the other, presumably gouged out, remained closed. Around him, on the floor, Indiana counted several stone or ivory figurines: a shark, a wolf, a raven.

"What are these objects for?" he whispered to Adolphus.

With great care, Adolphus replied in a low voice, "These are the shaman's assistants. They accompany him and aid him during his journey."
Kneeling, bare-chested, the shaman twisted in all directions. In a hoarse voice, he recited incomprehensible words. Foam came out of his mouth. His single eye, turned inward, showed only white.

Despite the low temperature he was clearly sweating profusely. A piercing howl erupted from his throat. A kind of wolf cry. Kuluk fell to the ground, seemingly lifeless, and everyone froze.
Terrified, the very young children sought refuge in their mothers' arms. The moms feigning fear held them snugly.

Gradually, they stifled their tears. And silence fell, absolute silence.

From the depths of the Earth a breathing and crackling could be heard, it sounded and felt as if giants were walking on the snow. It was crucial not to make any noise because the Spirits were speaking to Kuluk.

Indiana held his breath.

Like a bow being released, the shaman sprang up straight. Very agile, he leaped to his feet. Pointing his finger forward, he moved toward Indiana, shouting incomprehensible words.

Kuluk's single eye seemed to emit a kind of energy beam. Surprised, the young adventurer felt a jolt in his heart. He took two steps back and... fell to the ground, on his backside, both feet in the air. Was he hearing boisterous laughter?

Chapter 2
Black Stone and Sacred Mountains

The shaman danced around Indiana, a long ivory knife gleaming in his palm.

Looking to Indy like a huge mosquito ready to pierce its stinger through the flesh of its victim, Kuluk twirled around buzzing. Was he going to plunge his weapon into Indy's throat? Helpless, the terrified boy cast a desperate look toward his old American friend.

He wished he could shout, "Help, Adolphus, help me! Can't you see this madman is going to kill me!" But no sound could escape his throat. The scholar didn't move a hair's breadth. The old man even smiled while stroking his goatee!

Manuminiag, opposite of her white friend, did not appear worried. She observed the scene with a wide smile, displaying her beautiful sparkling teeth. For a second, Indiana wondered if it was a nightmare. Leaning over him, the shaman twisted his lips. This was not the Kailua Indy knew, he looked like a savage from prehistoric times. Shouting, growling, grimacing, the natives closed their circle.

Fear gripped Indy's guts. Was he going to let himself be slaughtered without defending himself? Certainly not! Good grief! Who did they take him for? A coward? It wasn't the first time he risked his life, and he had always defended it dearly. He wouldn't give it away today, not even to the Spirits!

Suddenly, the shaman raised the ivory blade and, just as quickly, brought it down. The sharp tip

sank... into the ground. Between Indiana's boots! He didn't wait for more. Already, he had sprung to his feet. Vigorously, he pushed Kuluk backward. The shaman fell over. But, very agile despite his age, he didn't tumble. The other Inuits stepped aside.

All together, they let out a loud "Qaqortoq!" Then something completely unexpected happened. Instead of getting angry, as Indiana had expected, Kuluk stopped abruptly and smiled. Like a bear surrounded by a swarm of bees, he began to sway heavily from one foot to the other.

Finally, gathering momentum, he charged toward Indiana, who took the tackle squarely. The whole assembly burst into laughter. Manuminiag, joined the others laughing heartily. Alone in the middle of the tribe Adolphus looked dismayed, displeased with Indiana's behavior.

The young boy couldn't believe it. Indeed, the Inuits bewildered him with their changing attitudes, sometimes very solemn, sometimes laughing.

Encouraged by the general good mood and cheers, Indy gave Kuluk another shove. Despite being small and thin, Kuluk was very strong. He barely stepped back three paces and came back at him. At the moment of impact, the Inuits applauded.

Indy's mind was thinking "Sumo rules." Clearly, they considered this shove as a sort of comical game. Indiana disagreed, he found it unsportsmanlike. Suddenly, something broke his train of thought. What was that heap of rags over there? Horror struck - it was his precious hat! The boy hadn't realized he had fallen to the ground. And now, Kuluk,

approaching with heavy, blind steps, was surely going to flatten it like a pancake. Indy thought of creases that would not come out!

"Watch out!" yelled the young boy, diving between the shaman's bent legs.

Too late, alas! Before Indiana could even save his beloved hat, Kuluk was trampling on it.

"Now this is serious" grumbled the dismayed boy. Seeing Indy on all fours, the Inuits burst into laughter. Even Adolphus himself began to chuckle. Secretly, the young adventurer swore to get revenge at the earliest opportunity. Indy knew to laugh along in the moment as put his hat back into shape.

Around him, everyone without exception laughed: the fur-clad children as well as the elderly, the women with buns or the proud hunters. Indy did not feel like he was in on the joke at first, but something felt different by the end. It was ok. The laughter lasted until the shaman raised his hand. Instantly, silence fell. Slowly, Kuluk lowered his arm. Helping Indiana up, he spoke a few words in his language.

"Sorry! I don't understand!" said the boy, trying to reshape his Stetson, which he had finally retrieved.

With a gesture, Kuluk gestured for Manuminiag to step forward. The young girl took two steps forward and translated for Indy:

"My uncle says he appreciates your attitude. You distracted him, you're truly a man."

"Ap! Ap!" approved the shaman, before speaking again.

Very attentive, the assembly listened to the words of

the old sage, regularly nodding in approval. Clearly, his words were of the utmost seriousness.

Finally, the shaman stopped speaking and Manuminiag acted as interpreter once again: "He also says you are brave. You have the power within you. That's why the Spirits have chosen you, the kratounat, to take the Black Stone to the top of the Sacred Mountain."

"What? How?" gasped the boy.

Kuluk nodded.

"Ap. Ap." he repeated and, this time in English, he added:

"I spoke to the Spirits of the shark, the wolf, and the raven. They praised the bravery and intelligence of the young stranger. They told me he has tried to do right with the original people and he has seen more at his age than he should. They promised to watch over him throughout the journey."

For the young American the surprise was immense. Not knowing how to react he scratched his head and grimaced. As best he could, he overly adjusted his misshapen hat on his head.

"The j-journey! What journey?" he stammered, turning to look at Adolphus.

Already the scholar had become a trusted subject of research among the ranks of the Inuits with whom he stood. With a stern look, he positioned himself in front of the shaman.

"Kuluk, I respect your knowledge and the word of the Spirits. But it's impossible for Junior to embark on such an adventure. It's far too dangerous. Moreover, the Sacred Mountain is two or three days'

sled journey inland. Our boat must depart in about a week."

The shaman closed his eye. His face hardened. He seemed to ponder for a long moment before uttering a sentence in his language that elicited a resounding "Oooooh!" of consternation from the crowd. With heavy steps, he retreated to the other side of his tent.

"What did he say?" Indiana asked Manuminiag.

"He announced that will all die this winter due to the krautonauts' thievery and cowardice"

"How so?" exclaimed the boy, horrified by such news.

"As I have already explained to you, the Spirits gave the Black Stone to our ancestors from the sky, we are supposed to carefully guard it. We have always taken care of it. It is a good luck charm for our people. If our enemy, Björk steals it to take it away from here the Spirits will be very angry."

She was launching into lengthy explanations, but Indiana interrupted her:

"Who is this Björk, your enemy?"

"A wicked kratounat. He has eyes as clear as a wolf's and white hair like a rabbit's fur. He lives on the large boat that came from your iceless seas."

"I see," nodded Indy. "I believe I have seen him once, dressed in a sailor's uniform."

"He must be Danish," Adolphus specified.

"They say he's an adventurer and an unscrupulous trafficker. It seems he trades blue fox skins for tobacco, alcohol and sugarcubes.."

"He's an evil being!" Manuminiag continued. "He has already tried to steal the Black Stone. If he succeeds, the wrath of the Spirits will be immense. They will retaliate by causing such a cold winter that we will have no animals left to hunt. It will be famine."

Manuminiaq's voice trembled. Indiana understood her emotion. Did he have the right not to act? Did he believe this? He was about to accept the mission. But Adolphus, who had guessed his intention, preempted him:

"No, Junior! It's out of the question. You have a big heart, you're reckless, and you're a daredevil, I know! You've already faced dangers, I know! But your father asked me to look after you. He wouldn't accept you risking your life for a mere stone."
Indy didn't have to think to find a response.

"But it's not just any stone!" he protested.

"Okay, I concede," said the explorer. "The Black Stone is different. And for good reason! It's a meteorite. But do you honestly believe this story about a gift sent by the Spirits? Not me! It's just a cultural invention."

"That's false! You're lying, you bearded old seal!" Without warning, Manuminiag shoved him, hard. Completely furious, she started hitting him with her feet and fists. "Liar! Liar! The Black Stone is sacred. The Spirits sent it to us!"

"Calm down, young lady." At these cries, the Inuits approached. Their fierce eyes seemed ready to intervene.

Indiana turned to them and summoned every

bit of internal calm he could. "Everything's fine, don't worry." Most of them didn't understand a word of English. Yet Indiana's words had an immediate effect. Manuminiag calmed down and the atmosphere relaxed. He remembered Kuluk's endorsement. The crowd certainly did not want to fight with him now. The boy continued: "If, as you claim, this Black Stone has no value, can you tell me, my dear Adolphus, why Lieutenant Björk is so determined to seize it?"

"I never claimed before that it has no value," Adolphus interjected. "Quite the contrary. It's valuable to the unknown because it's made of an unknown material on Earth—consisting…"

As a strand of hair fell into her eyes, Manuminiag continued speaking: "My people couldn't care less about your paper money. Our Black Stone is priceless. All the dollars on Earth wouldn't suffice to buy it. That's why it must be returned to the Spirits. Do you understand, Indiana?"

She batted her eyelashes. Her delicately drawn eyes sparkled. Indiana felt charmed by this adorable sorceress.

Blushing slightly, he declared: "Well, okay, I accept. I will take the stone to the summit of the Sacred Mountain."

Annoyed, Adolphus frowned while Manuminiag, overjoyed, threw herself at the boy and rubbed her nose against his. Embarrassed, Indiana let her.

"I was sure of it," exclaimed the young girl, dancing. She announced the good news to her people, whose reaction was immediate. They rushed to-



wards Indy. Caught in the middle, the boy struggled to keep his hat on his head. Over their shoulders, he met Adolphus's dark gaze.

Clearly his father's friend did not appreciate how events were unfolding at all.

Chapter 3
Gifts and Feast

The inside of the igloo was brimming with movement and emotion.

Mothers with babies in their arms or grandmothers with wrinkled faces, hunters, or silent elders: all wanted to give a gift to the young stranger in anticipation of the journey he was about to undertake. Everyone wanted to be the first. A mischievous-looking hunter handed him a harpoon point.

"Kakkek Kukkukuuaraq!" he said loudly and slowly as if that would help Indy understand. The hunter continued with two or three sentences that Manuminiag smiled and translated into these words: "This point is very good. It has already caught a narwhal. You will surely need it."

Indy nodded his head in thanks. Next came the turn of an old man with a swaying gait. With the tips of his time-worn fingers, he timidly offered him a pipe made of bone. "It comes from his grandfather," explained Manuminiag from a corner of the room. "It's carved from a whale bone."

Shaterion intervened, saying, 'It comes from her grandfather,' explaining from a corner of the room. He added that Manuminiag had it. 'It's carved from a whale bone.'

Before Indy could figure out how to thank him for such a precious gift, the old man had made way for a mother carrying a baby on her back. She handed Indiana a very nice pair of mittens that she had made herself from spotted seal skin.

At his feet, there was soon a pile of various objects: a frozen fish, a necklace made of teeth and claws, wooden glasses... and even a strange, long comb.

Indiana's curiosity was piqued. "What is this feather duster for?" Sweeping the comb on his head.

"Indiana, that's enough," Manuminiag replied, her smile changed.

He persisted, "They called it something… what is 'Qupirruit'?"

She asked "You know what the difference between a shrimp and a grasshopper is?"

Indy looked puzzled.

"Culture is what you don't talk about. Shrimp and grasshoppers look a lot alike and for some reason westerners talk about eating one and not the other. One spends its life baked in the sun, the other soaked in muck. Think about tiny shrimp."

It dawned on Indy. "You mean this is to eat lice? Gross!"

"How many lice would a human need to eat?" Asked a laughing Manuminiag. "If you had been raised correctly you know eating a bigger insect is natural, lice are so small you need a comb to remove them."

Indy was baffled.

She then whispered, "It's fun to see what krautonauts will believe. Qupirruit is sort of between gathering and hunting. My cousin was joking that white people think so highly of themselves they might want to eat their own head lice."

Meanwhile, Adolphus Frederick Shaterton

had kept himself apart in a corner of the room. He had the dark look of bad days. With a nervous gesture, he kept pulling on his chin hairs as if he wanted to pluck them out one by one.

Taking advantage of the fact that nobody was around Indiana anymore, Adolphus walked towards Indy.

"Ouch!" Indy thought, trying to hide behind the lice comb. "Adolphus is going to get angry." Indeed, Indy being showered with gifts and attention exhausted Adolphus's patience.

"Indiana, that's enough! The joke has gone on long enough. There's no way you'll...

"Here, Adolphus, accept this gift," Indy simpered, offering him the lice comb as if it were the most beautiful flower.

"Grrr!" growled the academic, "your jokes will catch up with you."

With these words, he turned on his heels, his thick fur-lined parka swirling around him. As he left, he issued a warning. "One of these days, you'll regret not having listened to my advice. We'll talk about this again, Junior! Your father won't be very happy to learn that you disobeyed me."

Indy shrugged. Manuminiag looked at him warmly, conveying more than any words could.

"Oh, my! Copper Mosquito is as angry as a wounded bear."

"You're right, Manu. By tomorrow he'll have forgotten all about it. I know him well. He has a heart of gold."

The boy and the girl were on a mission. To

celebrate the occasion the tribe organized a feast and everyone had gone in search of provisions. Manuminiag stood facing Indiana and asked in her sweetest voice

"I really want to accompany you to the top of the Sacred Mountain. Will you take me?"

Perplexed by the sudden question, Indiana didn't need to rack his brain to find an answer. From behind the curtain, Kuluk's voice rang out:

"Impossible! The kratounat must go alone. The Spirits demand it! The Inuits are not allowed to enter the White Land, let alone climb the Sacred Mountain."

Pushing aside the fur curtain, the shaman appeared. Kuluk no longer had the wolf fur on his head and back, but a jacket made of black and white feathers. He seemed even smaller than before. In his arms, he carried a sort of chest which he placed delicately at Indy's feet.

He opened it with even more care.

What did it contain? Surely the precious Black Stone. Yet Indy saw only a carefully folded piece of fur and a shoulder blade bone that the shaman pulled out with solemnity.

"Your face reminds me of a lost seal in the middle of the ice" the man stated.

"I wonder what you plan to do with this bone," the boy retorted. "It's all dried up. There's nothing left to eat on it. Even a starving dog wouldn't want it."

"Mistake, little one! Our dogs are always hungry. But they shouldn't eat that bone, above all. It

will guide you all the way to the Spirits' cave."

"How so?" exclaimed Indiana.

"Look closely," replied the shaman, sliding his fingernail across the flat part of the bone.

Indy leaned in. In the darkness, he discerned lines, dots, and crosses engraved on the bone.

"It looks like a map," he observed.

With his finger, the shaman traced the path the young adventurer would have to take on the map.

"You're right, it's the map of the White Land. If all goes well, after three days of sledging, you should arrive at the glacier of the Sacred Mountain, here. But the journey inland, to the land inhabited by the Spirits, is perilous. Before reaching the Whale Gate, you'll have to cross the fjord, pass through this pass, walk through the great chaos of ice. You'll have to be very careful, as the dangers are numerous."

While Kuluk gave his advice, Manuminiag seemed to sulk in the dark corner of the igloo where she had withdrawn.

Surely she was upset about not being able to accompany her friend.

"I have asked the Spirits to watch over you," Kuluk continued. "If you need them, you can invoke their help."

As he said this, the shaman handed over a small pouch made of white rabbit skin that he had taken from his chest. Indiana took it.

"Open it!" commanded the old man.

Indy untied the pouch. It contained two teeth and a feather. "What could these possibly be used for?" he wondered while scratching his head.

“Listen to me carefully,” whispered the shaman. “I’m going to entrust you with the secret that will allow you to speak to the Spirits of the shark, the wolf, and the white crow.”

Indy couldn’t help but smirk. But he quickly regained his composure. He didn’t want Kuluk to think he was mocking him. The shaman narrowed his eyes and, in a cavernous voice, continued:

“You have here a wolf tooth, a shark tooth, and a white crow feather. In case of need, you just have to take them in your hand on the side of your heart and say very loudly: Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik.”

‘Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik,’ repeated Indiana.

‘Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik.’ It’s like a magic spell,” he thought, amused.

Kuluk made him jump: “When you say the magic words, you must not think of anything else, otherwise it won’t work!”

Indiana nodded. Kuluk seemed satisfied.

Gently, he plunged his hand into his chest. He pushed aside the furs and the Black Stone appeared, like a jewel in its case.

“Hooooo!” exclaimed Indy, admiringly.

As large and oval as an ostrich egg, the stone was of an intense black, like he had never seen before. A halo surrounded it. It seemed to be bathed in an unreal light.

“Take it,” the old man said, motioning to Indy.

“Hmm! Hmm!” The boy hesitated. The old man

gave him a dignified look.

"Are you afraid?"

"Afraid? Certainly not!"

And, to prove what he was saying, the boy grabbed the sacred stone with both hands.

What a surprise it was! It was very heavy. Fifteen kilos, perhaps. A gentle warmth emanated from it, as if it were coming from a fire.

"From now on, no one else but you can touch the stone. You are responsible for it. Our lives depend on you."

"You can trust me, Kuluk. In three days, the Spirits will have their stone back. They will be appeased. Your people will have a peaceful winter." Indiana had barely finished speaking these words when Inuits entered, laden with provisions. The shaman withdrew, Indiana found himself in the company of Manuminiag in the midst of the igloo now filled with people again.

Soon, the room was buzzing like a beehive. All kinds of food had been gathered. Generous portions of food Indy had never seen but thought as clever methods of keeping fed in brutal cold. Preserved shark, seal flippers bathing in oil, salmon in multiple forms, dried caribou, birds preserved in their fat, things he had never seen. The only cuisine he could liken it to is some of what he had run into in China and it was not that similar.

A hunter had brought a freshly killed whole seal, and the women were cutting pieces with their crescent-shaped knives. As snow was melting to boil some pieces of meat, the meal was already begin-

ning. With fierce appetites people devoured the raw fat in a way that reminded Indy of the fat sandwiches popular in Philadelphia and New Jersey. They ate the whole seal and offered parts to young children who seemed to relish them as if they were treats.

Indiana was not a fan. He knew fish-eye soup in China was a delicacy. Eating eyes was tough for him, definitely not today! Nor did he want to eat that strong-smelling black meat. Yet he was offered some, and he couldn't refuse. He dipped his fingers into the broth and took out a piece. With a shudder, he brought it to his lips. Everyone watched him in silence. He chewed. Surprise! It wasn't as flavorful as he had imagined. The saltiness made it tasted better as he chewed.

"Mmm!" he said, nodding his head. "It's good."

Manuminiag translated. Then the applause rang out. Then the conversations resumed even livelier than before.

Indy didn't stay at the party for very long. Night was falling when he left the igloo. Manuminiag accompanied him. She had agreed to help him prepare for the early departure the next morning. His sled was in a sort of shed, next to the wooden house, which was already dark since no light was shining through its windows.

Seemingly, the two friends filled the sled with the necessary provisions for a week: biscuits, canned goods, and meat quarters for the dogs. Not a word was said. During this time, Manuminiag didn't say a word.



"What's wrong, Manu? Why the long face?" Indy asked, concerned.

"I'm sad," the young girl replied. "You're going away, and I have to stay."

"I'll come back."

"But then you'll go back to your country forever!" she protested, pursing her lips.

Embarrassed, Indiana felt himself blush. She was right. However, for now, only one thing mattered: fulfilling the mission that Kuluk had entrusted to him. As for the rest, he would see when the time came.

He turned to explain this to Manuminiag, but she had disappeared.

"She's a bit temperamental," Indy thought, shrugging. Then he continued his loading. A kerosene stove, one or two pots, a compass. What else did he need? He would bring his whip, of course. But he also needed a gun. The weapon would be useful if he encountered bears or wolves, and perhaps even for hunting, if necessary.

All that remained was for him to go to bed. Was it prudent to leave the Black Stone in the sled? No, it was better that he kept it on him. Björk might get the idea to come and steal it from him during the night.

Loaded with the stone, Indy was about to leave the warehouse when Manuminiag reappeared. A broad smile lit up her face. She approached, trying to hide something behind her back.

"What are you hiding?" the boy asked.

"Surprise," she replied, handing him a pack-

age.

It was wrapped in newspaper and tied with a nice rope bow. It wasn't very heavy. What could it contain?

Intrigued, Indiana untied the string. "Hand-made boots!" he exclaimed. "How beautiful they are!"

"We call them kamiks," she said.

"It's very kind, Manu, but I already have boots," he continued. "They're from Mexico."

The girl frowned. "Kamiks are much warmer and more comfortable! You'll be glad to have them when it gets very cold."

"True, you're right! They're fantastic!" Indiana joked, stroking the fur of his new boots like a live animal. He had not really worn fur before. Manuminiag smiled. She knew if he wore his Mexico boots he would not return with toes.
To complete his outfit, the boy also put on his parka, with its hood trimmed with fox fur. Finally, he slipped his hands into his sealskin mittens.

Manuminiag applauded. "That beaked nose will hold your goggles perfectly!"

Was that a compliment? Indy felt very proud. He puffed out his chest and with confident steps headed towards the exit. Outside his temporary pet dog Kranoag was waiting. This dog was the leader of the pack that would pull the sled for three days. Since his arrival in the land of the Inuits, the animal had been following Indiana everywhere. In fifteen days, they had become the best of friends. However, tonight, surprised by his new master's attire, the

animal was wary. He sniffed him a bit, then let out two or three barks. Indiana crouched down and ran his fingers into the long, thick gray fur of the Great Northern dog. Indy rolled his fingertips into the dog's immense shoulder muscles and the dog slowly closed its eyes in delight.

"He really likes you," Manuminiag remarked.

"I believe so! Kranoaq and I make a good team," Indy replied, patting the animal with the flat of his hand. "He reminds me of my dog." Manuminiag placed her palm on her friend's shoulder. "How so? You have a dog?"

"Yes, and I love him very much. She does not want to leave our family porch much these days."

"You have a good heart, that's good," she said.

As they talked, they walked to Adolphus's cabin. Kranoaq followed them. He would stay lying in front of the door, his nose between his paws until the next morning.

"Good evening," Indiana said as he prepared to enter.

"Good evening," Manuminiag replied, staying on the cabin's threshold. She seemed to be waiting for something. After a brief hesitation, Indy shook her hand.

"Grooo," growled Kranoag. It seemed as though he too was wishing Indy a good night. The boy smiled, patting his head, then went inside.

"He was already savoring this night of rest. It would be the last one he would spend warm, on a soft mattress, for a long time."

Chapter 4
The Visitor of the Night

All night in bed Indiana's mind raced about the adventure that awaited him, he couldn't seem to find sleep. Loads of thoughts were racing through his mind. On top of that, Adolphus was snoring louder than a locomotive in the next room. Indy had been in some rough situations, he thought sleeping in these conditions was close.

The boy thought of his father, Professor Henry Jones, and thought that he would surely be proud of the good deed he was about to accomplish. It had already been a month and a half since he had left him. Yet, it seemed like barely more than a week. It must be admitted that he hadn't had time to get bored. It had taken him a month by boat to come all the way to the Inuit village where Adolphus, as promised, was waiting for him.

Captain Glove commanded the ship Indy had traveled north on, named 'The Why Not.' Indy appreciated the fact that the Captain let him participate in the maneuvers on the voyage just like any other cabin boy. There was always some rigging to tidy up, a sail to hoist. Off the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River they had encountered the first whales, and soon after the first icebergs. It was like sailing in a gigantic shifting mountain range amidst the icebergs.

These icebergs were as high as the skyscrapers of New York. Indy could not help think about the irony of seeing them as beautiful after experiencing how destructive they could be on the Titanic less

than a year earlier.

The open sea had given way to the ice pack. The Why Not was equipped with a reinforced bow, struggled to make its way through by breaking the ice.

One day they saw two polar bears, a big one and a small one, running on the ice pack. It was a mother and her cub following her. A crew member had grabbed a rifle and aimed. But Indy pushed him to deflect his weapon as he fired, and the shot went off into the sky. The sailor, furious, turned towards him with the intention of retaliating. But the captain arrived, and it was as if it had never happened the moment he appeared.

As Indiana thought back to those days, it seemed to him that he could still hear the ship's creaking as it tore through the thick frozen layer.

He remembered a freezing day when the wind blew very strongly, lifting snow squalls that struck the deck and pierced through clothing like fine needles. It lasted twenty-four hours. The next day, the sky was completely blue.

And that's when the land appeared.

It was barely visible: a long black line on the horizon. There was only one day left before reaching the destination. During that night Indy was on edge, he felt the same now on his mattress on the precipice of a new leg of this adventure.

When he got up, the boat was entering Star Bay. An hour later, the anchor plunged into the calm waters, in front of the American base whose barracks could be seen. Impatiently, the boy had already

packed his bags, which amounted to a simple sack. Soon, the Why Not was surrounded by a swarm of boats. It was the first time Indiana had seen this. Fragile kayaks made of sealskin were swirling on the surface. Each of them was maneuvered by an Inuit man or woman, each wielding a paddle with a double blade reminiscent of others he had seen in the Pacific but different. There were also larger skiffs led by women pulling on the oars.

From one of these boats, called umiaks by the Inuits, came a voice.

"Hello, Junior!"

Indy leaned over the railing.

A small man with a red beard was gesturing in the boat, risking to capsize it.

Climbing down the rope ladder Indy joined his father's friend.

When they landed, the whole village was there. They wanted to see what the young stranger looked like. Boys Indy's age seldom came this far north.

Adolphus spoke the Inuit language called Kalaallisut. They shook hands and made introductions.

Among the residents, Indy noticed a young girl with an almond-shaped face, dressed in a white fox anorak, silver seal skin pants, and fur boots. Their eyes met, and she stepped forward, addressing him in perfect English:

"Hello, my name is Manuminiag, I am the niece of the Shaman Kuluk. Have you traveled well?"

"Very well."


SSLASH!!

“You might be hungry?” Indeed, Indiana had not eaten breakfast. Moreover, he could no longer bear the food from the Why Not and dreamed of something other than biscuits dipped in coffee tasting like old socks. He just had never been handed fatty meat in such a friendly and casual way, as the young girl offered him a portion.

Seeing a questioning glance, Adolphus encouraged him:

“Go ahead, it’s tamaq: narwhal blubber. It’s full of vitamins.”

Overcoming his initial disgust, Indy chewed the piece, not without appreciating its slight hazelnut flavor.

It had been almost a month since that arrival. Indy considered himself quite the connoisseur of Artic fats by now. And he had already learned a lot with the Inuits. The research they were doing with Adolphus was obviously insightful to them and Indiana had roughly figured out how Shamans were a mix of clergy and the professoriate in their culture. Driving a sled, fishing by digging a hole in the ice, building an igloo. And now, he was going to live a great adventure. That would be a lot to tell his classmates when school started again. All these thoughts floated in his head. Suddenly, it was pitch black. He had fallen asleep.

How long had he slept before being woken up? Two barks? An hour? Two? He couldn’t tell. He couldn’t strike a match. It was three o’clock, and it was pitch black.

“Strange!” he thought. “Why is Kranoag

howling like that? Could there be a visitor? I must find out."

Through the thin partition that separated the cabin into two, he could hear Adolphus's snoring. Despite Kranoag's barking, the American scholar was still snoring.

"He could have an earthquake, and he wouldn't even wake up," Indiana thought. Cautiously, on tiptoe, he advanced, firmly grasping his whip. Outside, the dog was barking louder and louder. And all the other dogs in the village were responding.

"Caution! It might be a bear," Indiana thought. "These animals are always hungry. Sometimes they even break through the walls of houses to plunder inside.

"Yikes! I wouldn't want to face one of those angry beasts. My whip wouldn't be enough to protect me!"

With great caution, the boy decided not to go out through the cabin door. He quietly slipped out the window to surprise the prowler.
His decision was right. Indeed, after silently sneaking along the cabin wall, Indiana discovered a huge silhouette standing out in the semi-darkness of the night.

"Too small for a bear, but too thick for an Inuit," he silently observed. "It can only be a European man. No doubt about it: with the sailor's cap he wears on his head, it's that scoundrel Björk."

The boy did not move. He trusted the dog. Already the animal had jumped on the man. His powerful jaws closed around the sailor's arm, forc-

ing him to drop his rifle. But that bandit had the strength of a giant. He was two meters tall. His torso was as wide as a Norman wardrobe. With a sweep of his sleeve, he threw Kranoag to the ground. The dog rolled before getting back on its feet, ready to attack again.

Taking advantage of this respite, Björk drew a long knife from his boot. A glint of light reflected off the blade. If Kranoag attacked, he would receive a bad blow.

"It's your turn," Indy said to himself, gripping the handle of his whip tightly. Roaring like a beast, he leaped out of his hiding place.

"Stop there, you scoundrel!" His leather lash rose, then struck in a flash. With a sharp crack, it lashed the giant's wrist.

"Aaaahhh!" he cried, dropping his weapon. Indiana's attack had caught him off guard. But once the element of surprise wore off, he came back at them. With a kick, he pushed Kranoag aside, lunged for his rifle, and aimed the barrel at Indy.

"Drop that weapon!"

Stunned! The voice that rang out was not Björk's, but Adolphus's.

Dressed only in a nightshirt despite the freezing temperature, the scholar stepped out onto the doorstep. He wore a rather ridiculous pom-pom nightcap which, with his pointed goatee, made him look like an elf.

"Ha! Halt! Stop! Put the gun down!" he ordered sternly, facing Björk, who was about to leap at

Indy.

"You're not so cocky now, are you?" Adolphus sneered. "The Black Stone is mine through legal claim, and I'll get it back by any means necessary!"

"We'll see about that," replied Indiana as the bandit abruptly turned on his heels and strode away.

"I'm warning you: I haven't said my last word," threatened the Dane as he disappeared into the night.

"Dreadful fellow!" muttered Indy. "I'll have to watch out for him."

"You're right, he seems formidable. But for now, it's the cold that's formidable. Let's go inside!" Inside the cabin, the temperature wasn't much warmer.

"Thanks to that rascal, I'm going to lose precious minutes of rest," groaned Adolphus, his teeth chattering. "I'm going back to bed quickly!"

"Me too! I need to sleep if I want to be in shape. But first and foremost, I want to thank you, Adolphus. Thank you twice," repeated Indiana. Shuffling his feet, the scholar returned to his bed, muttering, "It's nothing."

Two minutes later, his snores once again shook the cabin. Exhausted, Indy took barely any longer to sink into a deep sleep.

Chapter 5
Stowaway

The next morning upon wake-up Indiana felt in dazzling shape.

He sat down to a bowl of cereal. Across from him, Adolphus, on the contrary, was in a sorry state. He had a yellowish complexion, dark circles under his eyes, his cheeks were eaten up by his beard, and he looked troubled.

"Well, dear Adolphus, what's the matter with you? You look like you spent the night having nightmares."

"Exactly!" exclaimed the explorer, rolling his eyes while yawning so wide it seemed his jaw would dislocate; then, without saying anything more, he took a sip of tea.

Showing an unchanging determination, he leaped from the bed, like a spring. He landed on his feet, "It's time for me to go."

"One last time, Junior, I beg you, don't get involved in this adventure: it's too risky."

The boy acted as if he hadn't heard anything, stood in front of his friend, and extended his hand. "My decision is made, Adolphus. Goodbye."

"You're even more stubborn than your father," lamented Adolphus. "But since you've chosen..."

"Don't worry," reassured Indy. "Sleep soundly. Nothing serious will happen to me, and I'll be back in time to leave."

"Let's hope," sighed the old man, not very

encouraging. "I still wish you good luck."

Adolphus stood up to embrace Indiana. Observing him with his nightcap and nightshirt, his pointed beard and his elfin air, the boy couldn't help but smile. The explorer's lips also formed a slightly mocking smile. "Well done!" he said, ironically. "You look like a formidable Eskimo hunter with those boots and that fur-lined anorak."

They hugged each other, and Indy left. Outside, it was clear blue sky. Not a single cloud obscured the sky. In the distance, to the horizon, stretched the white of the snow and ice that he would have to cross. The boy felt his heart rate accelerate a bit.

"What if Adolphus was right?" he wondered. "I might be heading into terrible dangers. There's still time to refuse." But he thought back to all the adventures he had already experienced, all the difficult situations he had escaped from and quickly forgot his doubts. Besides, it was too late to change his mind. All the villagers were there, gathered, to witness his departure. He couldn't disappoint them. Kuluk broke away from the group and walked towards him.

Indiana greeted him: "Hello." The shaman didn't reply immediately. Instead, he stood on his bowed legs and began reciting words that Indy couldn't quite make out with a wide grin on his face.

"The Spirits accompany you," Liana thanked him, but he was thinking about something else: "Where is Manuminiag? I don't see her. It's strange that she's not here to bid me farewell."

"Do you remember the magic formula?" Kuluk asked him.

"Huh? Um, yes," the boy replied caught off guard. "Amatog... um! zig and roc... um And then no, I don't remember it! Besides, it doesn't matter. It won't be of any use to me."

The shaman's already dark single eye became very black. It gleamed like an ember. In a hoarse voice, the old man retorted, "You're wrong to mock the Spirits. They don't like that."

"Um! Yes... that's true," the boy stammered, ashamed. "I won't do it again."

"Very well," appreciated Kuluk. "And remember, if you need the shark, the wolf, or the raven, just call them with the words that best describe your people: "Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik""

"Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik," repeated Indiana.

"Now, go! Your journey will be long."
During this discussion, a hunter had moved Indiana's sled forward. The six dogs harnessed and eager awaiting the departure signal. Only Kranoag remained free to move. He was the leader of the pack. With his tail held high, he circled around Indiana. "What's the matter?" the boy asked him. "Yes, I know! We're going to go!" he added, tapping the animal's muzzle.

In fact, Indy delayed the moment of his departure. He hoped that Manuminiag would arrive.

"Perhaps she's too sad not to accompany me," he thought. "Or too angry, and she's sulking. Unless something happened to her?"

Unfortunately, it was too late to investigate. He had to set off.

As he had learned, he settled at the back of the sled, standing on the two runners. He raised his whip, twirled it above the animals, then, with a flick of his wrist, cracked it while shouting, “Kraaaaaaa!” Obeying his command, the dogs pulled together in unison. The adventure began. The snow was deep and difficult to traverse, the sled was heavy. Despite all that, the team of dogs pulled joyfully. Like them, Indy felt happy.

With his tail held high like a plume, Kranoag galloped ahead. Sniffing the air eagerly, he avoided rocks and patches of soft snow. Very quickly, the crew arrived at the north of the fjord. From there, the terrain was flat until the foot of the great cliff, far away on the horizon, which Indiana would have to climb the next day. That was one of the main difficulties. But before that, he had to cross this expanse of frozen sea.

After a short stop to consult the map engraved on bone, he resumed his journey. Gradually, the snow became scarce. There were more and more ice patches. The terrain became dangerous, and the dogs slowed down.

The further they advanced toward the middle of the fjord, the more cautious they had to be. In some places, the ice was at risk of breaking. Suddenly, Indiana spotted an almost black slab on which water was flowing. Far ahead, Kranoag had also seen the danger. He stopped, and the whole pack immediately halted its course. Indy whistled for

Kranoag, who returned to him.

"You're a good dog," the boy congratulated him. "You sensed well that this layer might crack. We'll pass by it." Sun warms the black rock, the rock melts the ice, thought Indy.

With a simple bark, the animal let him know that he understood. Indiana maneuvered to turn around. They set off again. A little further, they found themselves on ice without snow. It was dark, meaning it froze when it was not snowing, and as corrugated as corrugated iron.

"Yah! Yah! Yah!" Indiana encouraged his animals with his voice. Completely excited, they redoubled their efforts. The sled was moving faster than a galloping horse.

"Yasouh!" Indy cried out again, exhilarated by the wind and speed. Unfortunately, he was going too fast. He couldn't avoid a large ridge across the path. A crack was heard. Everything tilted, and the boy was abruptly thrown into the air. The right runner of the sled had just broken.

Luckily, Indy was very flexible and trained. He executed two or three somersaults before coming to a stop. Meanwhile, the panicked dogs continued their course. Indy sat for a moment, feeling a bit dizzy, before getting up.

"Oh no! cursed inwardly. If the dogs don't stop, I'll end up lost in the middle of this icy desert alone."

With dismay, he watched the sled disappear. Kranoag was trying to stop it, but the frightened pack no longer obeyed him.

With his eyes, Indiana followed the trail left by the sled: packets of biscuits, cans, the oil stove, the bear skin, the entire contents of the sled were scattered on the ground.

"What a disaster!" the boy grumbled. "It will take me at least an hour to load all this! And even then, assuming the dogs come back with the sled!" To save time, he began to gather his belongings. Suddenly, he saw his bear skin moving.

"Oh dear! This is bad! I must have received a nasty blow to the head; it's making me lose my mind."

Yet, no, he wasn't dreaming. The skin was really moving. It even emitted a muffled sort of grunt. Cautiously, Indiana approached. What was this marvel?

It didn't take him long to understand.

"Manuminiag!" he exclaimed as the young girl's face appeared.

"Yes, it's me," she replied in a very soft voice, so gentle that it was impossible not to be charmed.

"I understand better now why I didn't see you in the village when I left!" As she struggled to get up, the young girl flashed a wide smile. "I really wanted to accompany you, so I hid under the skin during the night. I heard your fight with Björk. I truly admire you; you are a very brave kratounat."

Touched to the heart by the compliment, Indiana blushed. But, partly to hide his embarrassment, he replied, "And you, you are a very disobedient girl. Your uncle Kuluk will be furious when he learns that you didn't follow his instructions. And on top of

that, I didn't plan for enough food for two people. How will we survive?"

"Don't worry," she said, first, I don't eat much myself. Second, we can hunt, fish, gather eggs." She replied with such a sweet voice and mischievous look that it was impossible to get angry. The boy softened, "Alright, we'll manage."
Manuminiag jumped for joy. "I'm sure everything will be fine."

"And if the Spirits get angry, as your uncle promised?" The young girl didn't have time to respond. A joyful bark echoed. It was Kranoag. The dog was rushing towards them. Behind him, the whole pack followed, pulling the sled askew.

"He's in a strange state," Indiana noted. "I'll fix him."

"In the meantime, I'll gather everything that was scattered on the ice. In less than an hour, we can set off again."

Chapter 6
Twenty Thousand Eyes Under the Sea

Indiana set about repairing the sled with wire and rope. Meanwhile, Manuminiag gathered the scattered belongings on the ice. After an hour of effort, the repair was completed.

"I hope my makeshift repair will be sturdy enough to last until the end of the journey," thought Indiana as he hitched the new dogs. Once the operation was finished, he put the sled back on its runners. His friend was waiting next to the pile of provisions, sitting on a crate.

Indy parked beside her and also noticed the strange look on the young girl's face. "What's going on? Why the long face?" Instead of answering, the girl grumbled. She didn't cheer up. It was strange. She was usually always cheerful. This attitude wasn't like her. "Pass me the Black Stone. I'm going to clean it."

"Start with iron."

At these words, Manuminiag's face darkened even more. Then she burst into tears and looked away. Indiana didn't understand this sudden outburst of tears. Indy got off the sled clearly determined to put the stone away himself. Without wasting time, he searched among the crates and boxes for the chest containing it. It was nowhere to be found.

"Where on earth is that chest?" he exclaimed in frustration.

"Promise me you won't get angry, Indy," Manuminiag said in a small voice.

"Get angry? But why?" At these words shel cried even harder. Indy invited her to sit on the edge of the sled. Between sobs she tried to speak.

"Lies... hmm... it's a big disaster…"

"Calm down," the boy said gently, putting his arm around his friend's shoulder.

"Indy, it's terrible!" she said, taking a deep breath.

"What's terrible? Will you tell me finally?"

"The stone..." "What about the stone? What's wrong with it?" Indy started to lose patience. Manuminiag sniffled and looked at him with red eyes. "When I found the chest, it had rolled into a crevasse. I pulled it out, and it was empty!"

"How is that possible?" the boy choked.

"Yes, Indy. It's the truth," she mumbled, twisting a corner of her anorak.

"You mean the stone is gone?"

"That's exactly it. It must have rolled into the crevasse. It's under the ice now. At the bottom of the sea."

Stunned, Indiana burst out, "For heaven's sake! Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

The young girl didn't respond. She stared at the tip of her boots. Indiana regained his composure. What was the use of getting angry?

He paced back and forth on the ice, thinking. "Go back to the village? No, impossible! Is it bad news? No! Impossible! Kuluk and the other villagers trusted me. I have no right to disappoint them." Under his feet, he observed the ice. It was dark gray, very hard, and full of air bubbles. His gaze fell on a

narrow crevasse. Its two walls were smooth. Deep down, he could see water of an almost black-blue color. “Brrrr! It must be freezing!” he thought, shivering.

With his gaze, he followed the crevasse. It widened into the distance. About ten meters away, he spotted the chest. It was overturned, the lid wide open.

“Come with me,” he ordered Manuminiag. “We’ll check if the stone isn’t stuck in the crevasse. I might be able to retrieve it.”

Without a word, she followed him. Trailing behind, Kranoag accompanied them. He was the first to reach the chest and began to sniff around it.

At this spot, the crevasse measured between twenty and thirty centimeters wide.

“Alas! It’s too wide to hold the stone. Only the empty chest remains. The Black Stone is indeed at the bottom of the sea. It’s a real disaster. I wonder what your uncle Kuluk and the other villagers will say when they find out!”

“We don’t have to tell the truth,” the young girl said, adopting a conspiratorial air. “We could say that you brought it back to the top of the Sacred Mountain. No one will check.”

She paused for a few seconds and then reconsidered.

“No, impossible! The Spirits might complain to Kuluk.”

“Perhaps,” the boy continued. “Anyway, I’m not in the habit of lying. We need to find another solution to fix this mess.”

“You’re right. It’s a huge mess. I’m too

ashamed. I won't go back to the village. I'll go far away, to the depths of the white desert. There, I'll give my life to the Spirits."

At these words, Indiana's heart began to beat very fast. Would he let his friend sacrifice herself? No! He couldn't accept that.

"We still have a chance," he said. "I'll ask the Spirits for help. It may not work."

"Search, you're right!" exclaimed the relieved Inuit suddenly. "You have to try to make them speak. They'll surely give you good advice."

Indiana couldn't help but shrug. He didn't really believe in the Spirits. But he had to try. In this white country so different from others, anything could happen, even the most unbelievable things. Following Kuluk's instructions, he took off his anorak, his sweater, and his T-shirt. As soon as he was shirtless, the icy cold bit into his skin. Shivering, he unfastened the necklace that the shaman had given him before his departure.

From the rabbit fur pouch, he took out the raven's feather, the bear claw, and the shark tooth. He held the latter in the palm of his hand and squeezed it tightly. Closing his eyes to concentrate, he pointed the tip of the tooth towards the sky and repeated the formula the shaman had taught him:

"Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik... Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik... Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik..."

At first, he felt nothing. Except the cold that made him shiver more and more.
Yet he persisted:



"Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik... Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik..."
Then something incredible happened. A gentle warmth, seemingly emanating from the shark tooth, warmed his hand. It descended along his arm, enveloping him entirely. The boy soon felt very hot. He was sweating. Tingling sensations ran through him, like electricity.

Suddenly, it seemed to him that he was leaving his body. He tried to open his eyes. Impossible! His eyelids seemed to be glued shut.

An unknown force pulled him. It dragged him into the crevasse, sucking him underwater. Everything then happened very quickly. He passed through a school of fish. He saw squids, seals, walruses, and all sorts of other marine animals.

Suddenly, a huge shark rushed towards him. Its mouth was wide open, filled with sharp teeth. Indy felt immense fear. He felt like he was in a nightmare that wouldn't end. Was the shark going to devour him? No! Instead of attacking him, the animal began to speak to him.

"I am Mamoq, the Spirit of the great shark. You called me, I came. Now, tell me what you want."
The boy didn't even wonder at hearing the formidable inhabitant of the deep sea speak to him. In this situation, it didn't seem abnormal. So, he replied without hesitation:

"My name is Indiana. The Spirits have designated me to bring the Black Stone to the top of the Sacred Mountain. Unfortunately, my sled overturned, and the stone rolled somewhere to the bottom of

the sea. You must help me find it."
With its deep voice, the shark invited him to climb onto its back:

"Hold on! We are going to descend into the depths of the sea."
Indiana straddled the animal.

"Are you ready?" it asked.

"Yes."

"Then let's go."

Effortlessly, the shark plunged into the depths. They passed by a seal that quickly swam away. It seemed to fear becoming its prey. As they descended further, light became rare. Soon they found themselves in a liquid night, surrounded by thousands of fish with gleaming eyes that parted to let them pass.

Finally, they reached the bottom of the sea. It was covered with rocks and tall grass.

"Here we are!" said Mamoq. "I will show you where the stone is. But, for that, you must pass a test."

"Okay," replied Indy. "I'm ready."

"Turn around," commanded the other.
Indiana obeyed. He then saw a band of sharks rushing towards him. There were at least twenty of them. He turned around again.

Mamoq had disappeared. He then understood that the Spirit of the great shark wanted to test his courage.

Now, the formidable carnivores surrounded him. Obviously, they intended to have a feast. Indiana didn't panic; he waited. The animals brushed

against him, mouths open, jaws clicking together. Sharper than shark teeth. This deadly ballet lasted for long minutes. Mastering his terror, the boy remained perfectly still, and none of the sharks attacked him. Suddenly, they disappeared as quickly as they had come.

"Bravo, courageous kratounat! You have succeeded."

Mysteriously, Mamoq had reappeared.

"You may have already noticed that the most difficult things to find are always the closest," he said. "They are right near us, and we don't see them."

"That's true," agreed Indy. "Often my father spends hours looking for his glasses, and they are simply in his pockets."

"Exactly! That's it. You thought the stone had been swallowed by the crevasse. In reality, it is in a hole, not far from the chest. To find it, you will have to trust your friend Kranoaq."

With these words, Mamoq disappeared.

Indiana found himself alone among the algae and rocks. Then, without understanding how he had succeeded, he found himself on the surface of the ice. There, in one last effort, he pulled himself onto the edge before losing consciousness.

Some time later, he woke up. Lying at the bottom of the sled, he opened his eyes and saw Manuminiaq observing him.

"What happened?" he asked, rubbing his eyes. "I don't remember very well, I feel like I went very far, where no one ever goes."

Smiling, the girl covered him with the bear

skin.

"You went to meet the Spirits," she explained.

"During your long journey, you spoke a lot."

"I'm cold," said the boy, shivering.

"Drink this hot tea, it will warm you up," she replied, handing him a steaming cup.

Sip after sip, he drank the tea and felt his strength return. Gradually, in the haze of his brain, Mamoq's words came back to him.

With difficulty, he got up and called Kranoaq, who immediately came running.

"Good dog!" he said, letting him smell the chest. "Find the stone. Search."

"Woof! Woof!" barked the animal, whose golden eyes were surrounded by a black circle that looked like glasses.

And he darted off, sniffing the ground. He hesitated, turned for five minutes. He went from hole to hole, from crevice to crevice. Soon, he started scratching. He had found the stone! It was nestled in a hole, covered by a thin layer of snow.

It was a huge relief. Yet the two friends did not enjoy this moment of joy. They had fallen far behind.

But there was worse: a very strong wind, as noisy as a herd of bison, had started to blow. It lifted gusts of icy snow.

"The storm is coming," warned the girl. "We must protect ourselves as quickly as possible. In an hour, it will be upon us."

With her finger, she pointed to a completely white wall that had just formed on the horizon.

"It's incredible," said Indy. "I've seen several tornadoes back home in America. But it's the first time I've seen a wall of snow racing towards us!"

"It's not just the storm coming towards us," his interlocutor continued with concern. "I also see something else. Maybe a sled."

"Where?" asked Indiana. "You have remarkably sharp eyesight! I can't see anything in this darkness."

"You're right. I can make out a dark spot on the right."

He took his binoculars and adjusted them.

"There's a sled stopped. Its driver is very tall. Immense. No doubt. It's Björk. That scoundrel is pursuing us! He's setting up his camp to face the storm."

"We should do the same. In less than half an hour, it won't be possible to see more than a meter ahead."

There was no time to build an igloo. They simply overturned the sled and covered it with skins. Indiana carved some large snow blocks that they assembled to form a barrier against the wind.

The gusts became increasingly violent. The very fine snow crept everywhere. Even into their collars. After twenty minutes, everything was white.

Fortunately, Indy and Manuminiag had finished their makeshift shelter. Wrapped in their bear skins, they settled in. All they could do now was wait and rest.

Despite the howling of the storm, Manuminiag fell asleep almost immediately. She was used to

the whims of the weather.
Indiana, on the other hand, couldn't stop thinking about Björk following them. He was worried. For him, the night promised to be very long...

Chapter 7
One bear can hide another

Throughout the night, the wind had howled loudly. The very fine and cold flakes blown by the wind had penetrated under the hastily made shelter. When Indy woke up, the storm had stopped as if by magic. The sky, cleared of all clouds, was very blue. The sun shone brilliantly on the freshly fallen snow. The brightness was blinding. The boy had to first put on the protective goggles that had been given to him when he left. Immediately after, he adjusted his binoculars and pointed them in the direction of the cursed danger.

"Darn it! That cursed bandit is getting ready to leave. We need to get going before he catches up to us."

Would they have the time? It remained uncertain. The sled to load, the dogs to harness... And there was Manuminiag still sleeping!

"Up, lazybones!" said Indiana, shaking her.

A grunt was her response, followed by a few words in Kalaallisut. Indiana didn't speak that language, but it wasn't hard to guess it meant:

"Let me sleep!"

"Manuminiag, you have to get up right away. Björk is coming. It'll be your fault if that scoundrel catches up to us and steals the stone," insisted the boy.

Indiana had exaggerated a bit. Because of the fresh snow, Björk would take at least two hours to cover the distance between them.

Manuminiag sat up. Her eyes were swollen with

sleep, her hair tousled. She took a handful of white powder and rubbed it on her face.

"Original way to wash your face," remarked Indiana. "At least you don't have problems with leaking faucets."

The girl shrugged. "It seems that you always have hot water where you come from?"

"Exactly! We can take as many hot baths as we want. It's wonderful!"

She exclaimed dreamily. "I'm sure I would love to bathe every day in hot water."

"Unfortunately," Indy continued, "there are also many other very unpleasant things in my country. For example, going to school is mandatory. You can't imagine! It's a real pain to be cooped up devouring books. Believe me, I much prefer outdoor life."

"Eating books? What kind of Spirits do people from New Jersey believe in?" the girl exclaimed.

Indiana burst out laughing. "Ha! Ha! Ha! Devouring a book is just an expression. It doesn't mean we eat them, but that we read them very quickly, without stopping."

"Oh, I wouldn't like that," the girl sighed. Indiana wasn't listening anymore. He was looking all around. He started to walk around their shelter and came back, visibly concerned.

"What's wrong? Are you looking for something?"

"The dogs, I can't find them. Not one. I wonder why they ran away. Maybe they got lost in the storm."

Indiana wasn't listening anymore. He was looking all around. He started to walk around their shelter and came back, visibly concerned.

"No, no! I think it's an evil Spirit that devoured them. He couldn't find any books!" Manuminiag said, ironical.

"If you're joking, I don't find it funny!"

"I'm not making fun! I just wanted you to understand that we also have to learn a lot of things. The dogs are simply buried under the snow. That's their way of protecting themselves. Look."

With her finger, she pointed at small whitish bumps. Upon closer inspection, a black spot could be seen on the flank of each of them: it was the dogs' nose poking out to breathe.

"Kranoaq!" called Indiana.

Immediately, one of the snowy mounds began to move, then split like the shell of an egg. A mass of frozen fur emerged from this nest. It was Kranoag, barely recognizable. He shook himself and let out a howl. One by one, all the dogs emerged from their hiding spot. They were full of energy, not at all affected by the cold night.

As Manuminiag and Indiana distributed food to them, a fight broke out between the two youngest dogs. Kranoag leaped onto them. As the leader, he had to separate them. However, instead, the fight spread.

"That's enough!" shouted Indiana, cracking his whip. "We're losing a lot of time!"

But Indiana couldn't get them to obey. The animals' nervousness was too great. Something

wasn't right. But what?

Manuminiag suddenly cried out, "Nanok! Nanok!"

At first, Indiana didn't understand. Through the narrow slit of his protective goggles, he glanced around. He saw nothing but white. White everywhere. Under the sun, the fresh snow covered the landscape entirely and emitted a blinding light.

Yet, Manuminiag continued to shout, "Nanok! Be careful, Indy, it's very dangerous!"

Finally, Indiana spotted the polar bear advancing toward them. It was smaller than the one he had saved by preventing the sailor from killing it. But it still towered over him by at least two heads and weighed about four times his weight. Sniffing the air, it moved around.

"Watch out," repeated Manuminiag. "It's hungry. The smell of our food is attracting it."

As soon as he saw the bear, Kranoag rushed toward it. It wasn't the first time the dog had encountered a bear. He had a lot of experience with them. The Inuit elder who had loaned him to Indiana was the best bear hunter in the village.

With its feet planted firmly, fur bristling, the dog growled, showing its teeth. Facing him, the bear was wary. Standing on its hind legs, it opened its mouth wide and waved its front paws like a boxer.

Indiana rushed toward it, shouting and waving his arms, thinking it would scare it away.

"No, Indy! Don't do that!!!" Manuminiag screamed.

Too late! Indiana was already very close to the

bear. That's when another bear leaped out from behind an ice block. It was even larger and heavier than the first one. It was the mother.

The situation was becoming extremely dangerous because mother bears don't hesitate to attack to protect their young. Indiana remained rooted to the spot. Rarely had his fear been as strong as it was facing these two giants of white fur.

"Idiot!" he thought. "I don't have a weapon to defend myself. Not even a measly pocket knife." Slowly, the mother bear took a step forward, then another. She knew she was the strongest and didn't hurry. Her tall silhouette stood out against the sky. With a leap, she lunged forward while letting out a fierce growl.

Kranoag was her first victim. All excited, the dog, who had approached too closely, received a violent blow from her paw that sent him flying three meters. Indiana thought his turn had come to receive the heavy mass of flesh, fur, and bone. He closed his eyes. The bear growled. The boy tensed all his muscles. Nothing happened.

Two meters away, the beasts did not pay attention to him. They smelled the frozen meat. They were not interested in the sled or Manuminiag, who was smiling once again. And there was relief. In offering them the distraction of the dogs, she had saved her friend.

Cautiously, Indiana made his way back to the sled.

"Thank you!" he said, wiping his forehead. "Without you, I would surely be in the clutches of

those two big teddies."

"Or rather in their stomachs."

"Brrr! Let's not linger in this area!"

As fast as they could, they hitched the team to the sled. Meanwhile, Kranoag had gotten up. Still half-dazed from the blow the bear had given him, he was unsteady on his feet. He sat down again once, then got up again and staggered a few meters. He licked some snow, regained his senses, and rejoined the team.

"These voracious bears have finished their meal. I wouldn't want them to consider us dessert. Quickly, let's get out of here!"

"You're right, Indy, let's hurry! The bears are coming back towards us."

But they weren't the only ones! Barely within shooting range, Björk was racing towards them at full speed. Standing at the back of his sled, he was shouting and whipping his dogs.

"Get on quickly!" ordered Indiana to Manuminiag, who immediately jumped into the sled. Without wasting a second, the boy gave the order to depart, cracking his whip. The dogs immediately darted forward. But Björk's team was only twenty meters away.

Chapter 8
A Useful Crevasse

Led by Kranoag, the dogs didn't take long to reach their top speed. Indiana encouraged them with shouts. "Yah! Yah! Yah!"

Unfortunately, the thickness of the fresh snowfall from the night before slowed their progress. Björk, taking advantage of the trail, was closing in. Across the flat expanse of snow, the Danish man's dogs, more numerous, were gaining ground. Soon, the two sleds were side by side.

"Stop, you cursed brats!" shouted Björk.

"No way!" replied Indy. "It's the Black Stone that interests me. Just the stone. I mean no harm to you."

"Empty promises! Who do you take me for? I'm not a coward; I've sworn to bring the stone to the top of the Sacred Mountain, and I never go back on my word!"

"You brought this upon yourself!" yelled the bandit.

For the first time, Indiana saw the giant in full light. He was dressed like a sailor, in a navy blue wool jacket and a blue and white striped sweater. Bareheaded, he revealed his nearly shaved head. Beneath it, a bulging forehead loomed over a boxer's flattened nose and square chin. An immense scar ran across his right cheek, from his temple to the corner of his lips. His mouth, slightly askew because of the wound, remained slightly open, revealing a row of metallic teeth. But perhaps the most unsettling fea-

ture was his gaze. Beneath white eyebrows, his eyes, very light, almost white themselves, were bloodshot.

"This man doesn't look friendly, Indiana."

"That's the least one could say," thought Indiana.

Björk had no intention of being amiable. He pointed the barrel of a pistol directly at the young boy.

"Watch out!" cried Indy to Manuminiag. "This rascal is going to shoot at us."

The Inuit woman immediately lay down at the bottom of the sled. A shot rang out. The bullet whistled past Indiana's ears as he leaned to avoid it.

Was he going to let himself be shot like a common pigeon? Certainly not! With a quick and precise flick of his wrist, he deployed his whip. The long lash reached the giant's wrist.

Unable to withstand the pain, the man opened his hand and let his weapon slip away.

"You little brat, you'll pay for this. And dearly!" he yelled, stopping his team to retrieve his pistol.

Taking advantage of the distraction, Indiana urged his dogs on. It was better for him to gain as much distance as possible, as the chase was far from over. When Björk would have retrieved his weapon, he would start again. And then, he would undoubtedly be merciless.

Instead of staying on the flat terrain, Indiana decided to turn to the right. There, ice blocks formed a sort of maze where Björk would have much more difficulty catching up with them.

At the back of the sled, Manuminiag let out a

cry.

"Watch out, Indy! Ahhhh! We're going to crash!!!"

In a tighter turn, the sled had just skidded. It was heading straight towards a wall of ice. But Indiana, with astonishing reflexes, managed to correct its course.

"Phew!" he breathed. "We escaped the worst. Let's hope the skate I repaired doesn't break again." Unfortunately, Björk was now only fifty meters behind them. They could distinctly hear his shouts and the barking of his pack.

Indiana once again encouraged his dogs. Kranoag did everything possible to find the best path among the ice blocks. That dog had an experience and instinct that never failed him.

"As long as we stay in the midst of the blocks," Indiana thought, "we're not at risk of being overtaken. But once we're out in the open again, I wonder how we'll manage to escape him."

Indeed, they soon reached a flat area on the vast frozen sea. Indiana realized then that they had headed towards the spot where the ice was cracking. At any moment, it could break and swallow them in water so cold they wouldn't survive more than five minutes.

On the other side, with that scoundrel Björk hot on their heels, there was no way to turn back. The dogs, excited, gave their all. For almost a kilometer, Björk remained at a respectable distance. But his team, twice as numerous as Indy's, soon regained the advantage.

Gunshots began to rain down. To avoid them, Indiana zigzagged. Fortunately, the shots were not accurate. But the situation was becoming truly catastrophic. They absolutely needed to find a solution to slow down their pursuer.

"I have an idea!" exclaimed Indy. "We're going to throw our cargo across the path."

"What! But that's madness. If we throw away the boxes and crates of food, how will we eat? We'll hunt if we have to. For now, the only thing that matters is getting rid of Björk."

"You're right," agreed Manuminiag, who immediately tossed a first barrel overboard. Thrown off by the speed, the barrel rolled chaotically. Barely, Björk managed to avoid it.

A crate containing provisions followed almost immediately. It hit Björk's sled from behind, but caused no damage.

In one sweep, they threw overboard everything that remained... except for the chest containing the Black Stone, of course, and a few other important things to keep, such as a lamp.

To avoid the projectiles, Björk began to slalom. Right, left, then right again. Once again, that devil of a bandit was going to get away without harm. One could even tell from his wild laughter that he was enjoying this chase. Yet, a crate hit one of his dogs. The animal spun around, dragging its nearest companion with it.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Indy joyfully. "We got him. His dogs are all tangled up. Before they get free, we'll gain some ground."



Ahead of them now, in the distance, was an immense cliff. They would have to climb it to reach a glacial plateau. The Sacred Mountain lay beyond. But before reaching the foot of the cliff, they still had to cross a flat expanse.

What was this area made of? Firm ice or blocks floating in the thawed sea? The sun, too blinding, prevented them from knowing.

Lightened of its load, the sled became faster than before. They needed to reach the cliff long before the Dane.

"Indiana," suddenly cried Manuminiag, "be careful!"

An obstacle had appeared. It was a crack in the ice. Unavoidable, it formed a canal two meters wide, at the bottom of which flowed black, icy water. What to do? It was impossible to turn back. The cursed Dane was not far away.

"Dog-gone it!" yelled Indy. "This is messed up. Unless..."

A few meters away, Indiana spotted a snow bridge. It looked fragile, ready to collapse.

"We'll take this passage, it's the only solution."

"You're crazy! The water is zero degrees. If we fall in, it's the end."

"I don't see anything else to do. Especially with Björk coming. Hold on."

The intrepid boy backed up his team to gain momentum. Launched at full speed, the animals didn't hesitate to cross the obstacle.

Half of the sled was still above the water when the snow bridge collapsed. In a final effort, the

dogs braced themselves on their legs, pulled with all their strength, and the sled, which threatened to tip into the icy water, finally made it to the other side of the crack. Phew! They were saved! And now no one could cross behind them. Or at least not for a long way, several kilometers.

Just fifteen meters from the crevasse, Björk saw that the Black Stone was slipping away from him. In a fit of rage, the scoundrel whipped his dogs even harder.

"You think you can escape me, huh? No! I warn you. Björk never misses his prey. Ha! Ha! Ha!" He accompanied his words with several shots from his pistol towards the fleeing sled, but they were now out of range.

"We're finally rid of him," sighed Indiana. "But all this has cost us a lot of time. And we have nothing left to eat," added Manuminiag.
The situation was far from the best.
But what they soon discovered was even worse!
After a hundred-meter sprint, Indiana surveyed the surroundings. They were surrounded by water on all sides.

"Disaster!" exclaimed the boy. "We're on a massive ice floe. It's detached from the rest of the ice pack. The current is pushing us towards the ocean. How are we going to make it back to shore?"

Indy's worry was immense. And rightly so. But Manuminiag, ever optimistic, found words to reassure him.

"Don't worry, it'll work out. The Spirits will help us."

Chapter 9
Bad Encounter

The sun had just disappeared over the horizon. It had been several hours since Indiana and Manuminiaq found themselves on their iceberg. The current still pushed them out to sea, and changing direction was impossible.

Indiana was fuming: “We’re definitely out of luck. I wonder if Adolphus was right. I should never have accepted this mission.”

“Don’t get discouraged, Indy. I’m sure everything will work out. We’ll catch some salmon. They’re plentiful and so voracious that you can catch them with just a hook.”

From the pocket of her anorak, the older woman pulled out fishing gear. Each of them cast a line into the water. Very quickly, they caught about ten fish. The smallest one was at least eighty centimeters long and weighed three kilos.

“What a miraculous catch!” exclaimed Indiana.

“At this moment,” explained Manuminiag, “they’re swimming upstream to spawn. They come from far away, and they’re very hungry.”

“Fantastic! We can feed the dogs and even make provisions for later. There’s just one thing: how are we going to cook our fish? We don’t have a stove anymore.”

“That’s not a problem. Raw flesh is very good.”

“What! I’m not a barbarian, I don’t eat raw

flesh!"

"Hehehe!" chuckled Manuminiag.

"Are you making fun of me or what?" the boy snapped.

"Just a little," replied the mischievous girl.

"What's so funny, miss?"

"Having courage is good. But it's not enough to be a true Inuit. You'll never be one of us if you don't accept eating raw meat."

"You're right," admitted Indiana. "I'm American and used to well-cooked beef steak, not raw fish."

"Well, you'll have to change your habits," replied Manuminiag.

Manuminiag prepared the fish. Scales had to be removed, they had to be gutted, and the filets detached. Some of them contained eggs. She handed a bit to her friend. He tasted it tentatively, then swallowed the piece whole.

"Mmm! Not bad," he said after swallowing. "It tastes like caviar. I tried it once in Russia."

"It's actually very good, especially since I've been taught to eat the dogs as a last resort."

At his feet, Krarenna listened attentively, but did he understand the conversation? Indiana hoped not.

"How can anyone stomach dog meat? Have you ever eaten it?"

"Once, yes. I was too young and don't remember. My uncle told me about it during a very long winter. We had no more provisions, and the cold made hunting impossible. So, we killed the dogs to feed ourselves. Many people in the village died."

She let a moment of silence pass and murmured, “My parents were among them.”

Then she fell silent. She, usually so cheerful, was on the verge of tears. Troubled, Indiana searched for words to comfort her but found none.

“Since then, many winters have passed,” the girl continued. “We never needed to eat dog again.” She handed him a second portion of fish. He ate it in silence before exclaiming, “I’m as hungry as a wolf! I think I could swallow a whale!”

“Liar!” the girl replied. “A whale is way too big for you all by yourself.”

“You’re right, half would be enough for me. I’ll leave you the other half.

They burst into laughter. A bit of humor had lightened the mood.

They were soon satiated. In turn, the dogs were given a ration of fish which they devoured without caring about the scales or bones. Now, they needed to prepare for another night outside, in the cold. They laid out their bear skin and lay down. Manuminiag fell asleep almost immediately. Indiana, on the other hand, watched the sky. The stars were shining. The boy thought that at that moment, his father might also be contemplating the same stars, over there, in America.

“It’s just as well that my father doesn’t know our situation,” he thought. “If he saw it, he’d worry about me. I absolutely must find a way to get out of this on my own before it’s too late.”

Yes, but how to escape from this floating prison? Swimming? Impossible, the water was far too icy.

Building a raft? Too complicated. There was only one solution that was somewhat reasonable: to throw the harpoon towards the shore when it was close enough. Once it was planted, they would just have to pull on the rope to get closer to solid ground. Yes, that was the only way out. Provided that the current brought them closer to the banks.

Indiana got up and observed the sea. Many blocks of ice were floating in it. They were on one of the largest ones. Unfortunately, it was also one of the farthest from the edge. Without losing heart, Indiana still kept watch for the right moment to act. He remained like this for half the night, waiting for the right moment to throw his harpoon. But fatigue overcame him, and he had to lie down to sleep for a few hours.

It was still dark when Manuminiag shook him. "Indy, wake up! Come quickly, there's a large boat on the horizon!"

Indiana's eyelids were heavy. He opened them nonetheless and jumped to his feet. Not far away, barely a hundred meters, the silhouette of a small sailing boat was visible. Immediately, Indiana threw himself into the bottom of the sled. He found a reserve of oil there, luckily still there. He cut a piece of skin and dipped it in the flammable liquid, thus obtaining a torch which he lit with his tinderbox.

"Help!" they both shouted while sending light signals. "Help! Help!"

Five minutes later, a light stirred on board the boat. Voices were heard. A boat was launched.

"Over here, help!" the two friends shouted

again.

A steady sound of oars dipping into the waves approached.

"Boats are rare, we're really lucky in our misfortune!" Indiana exclaimed cheerfully. "We'll be able to get some food and head back towards the Sacred Mountain."

Manuminiag, who had been staring fixedly at the boat, seemed much less joyful. She pouted.

"What's wrong?" the boy asked. "Why do you suddenly look so worried? You should be happy. We're going to be saved."

"Saved, I'm not so sure," she replied. "Look closely at that strange man. He's one of those Northern pirates who plunder whatever they find and kidnap everyone they encounter to turn them into slaves!"

"Come on! Come on!" Indy said skeptically. "He's just a sailor."

He wanted to reassure the girl. However, this bearded giant, wearing large earrings and a saber at his waist, did not inspire much confidence in him either. He also felt anxiety creeping over him.

Finally, the boat docked. Manuminiag couldn't resist the terror and fled. Indiana then understood that she was right. This grim-looking sailor was not animated by good intentions. As soon as he set foot on land, he shouted brutal cries in an unknown language and spat out a dirty brown juice. With his saber in hand, he advanced three steps.

Indiana retreated as much, as did Kranoag at his side.

Coming closer, the man took two more steps, speaking in a softer voice, as if to tame Indiana. When he reached the sled, he uncovered the box containing the Black Stone. Unable to resist his curiosity, he put his saber back in its sheath and seized the box. When he opened it, the stone sparkled, and his face lit up with satisfaction.

His fascination was so strong that he forgot all caution.

It took less than that for Indiana to take advantage. With a powerful whip stroke, he struck the pirate's wrist, causing him to let go.
Furious, he tried to grab his weapon.

But Indiana reacted even faster. His lash sliced through the air once more and landed.

The man screamed in pain. The leather snapped around his ankles.

At the same moment, Kranoag leaped at his chest. Unbalanced, the pirate fell backward, then collapsed. His head hit the frozen ground heavily, where he remained, half stunned.

Indiana took the opportunity to gag and tie him up with an old piece of rope.

"Well done, Kranoag! We did a good job!" he said.

The dog, very proud, wagged his tail high in the air.

Meanwhile, Manuminiag had reappeared. Cautious, she surveyed the area. She didn't dare to advance.

"You can come back without fear, all danger is gone. This idiot pirate is nothing more than a

common bundle. I tied him up so well that he can't even move a finger!"

On the ground, the unfortunate man wriggled and grumbled.

Shortly after, Indiana and Manuminiag finished loading the sled onto the boat.

In it, they had found some provisions, biscuits, dried meat, and canned goods.

Now the day was breaking. They had to disappear as soon as possible. Because the other pirates would not fail to pursue them when they realized the disappearance of their companion.
Indiana took the oars. He rowed with all his might towards the coast.

Manuminiag guided him through the blocks of ice. Given the short distance they had to cover, they quickly set foot on solid ground.

Their march towards the Sacred Mountain could continue.

Chapter 10
Lost in the Heart of the White Land

They landed on a strip of rocks and ice at the foot of a high cliff, unfortunately too steep to be climbed by dogs and a sled.

Where were they now in relation to their destination? Indiana consulted the map engraved on the shoulder blade.

"What bad luck! The current has drifted us south," he noted. "We'll have to walk at least another day to get back on the right track."

"Don't worry," Manuminiag replied. "I'm sure the Spirits will guide us."

"Hmm! Hmm!" the boy grunted skeptically. "I'd like to believe that. I just don't trust the Spirits too much. And anyway, we have no choice but to climb the base of the cliff."

"There must be a shortcut to reach its summit."

After retrieving a long rope from the packages of biscuits and the canned goods, they let the boat drift with the current. This way, the pirates wouldn't be able to track them.

Cautiously, they began to walk along the narrow strip of ice bordering the sea.

With every meter, the sled risked slipping and ending up in the icy water, dragging the dogs and its passengers with it.

Once again, Kranoag proved himself. As soon as he detected danger, he warned the other animals, who obeyed his orders.

They progressed like this for almost two hours. The cliff remained too vertical to climb. As long as the strip of ice was wide enough, nothing impeded them. Unfortunately, it soon became so narrow that the dogs refused to move forward.

"Thunder! It wouldn't surprise me, bad luck follows us," Indiana grumbled. "I'm starting to wonder if the Spirits aren't mocking us!"

"Shh! Don't say that, you might offend them," Manuminiag whispered.

"Offend the Spirits! I don't believe it!" Indy exclaimed, stomping his foot.

Kranoag, who had slipped to the other side of the difficult passage, returned wagging his tail. He barked to signal to his master that he should follow him.

The boy let himself be guided. The narrow passage circled around a huge rock. Further on, the cliff gradually lowered, giving way to a much gentler slope. A frozen stream descended, forming an ice cascade.

Full of hope, Indiana retraced his steps.

"The Spirits have heard you, there's still a way out for us," he declared to Manuminiag. "If we manage to cross the narrow passage, then the cascade, we can then reach a kind of pass, and then the plateau."

"You see, I knew it. The Spirits never forget the brave ones."

Okay, except their gift is poisoned! First, we risk a dip in icy water, then a fall," Indiana took control of the sled and ordered the dogs to move for-

ward. The animals traveled two meters, then refused to continue.

Without getting upset, the boy encouraged them with loud shouts. Nothing worked! The animals sensed that at any moment they could fall into the water. Faced with danger, they growled and trembled in all their limbs. Kranoag, in turn, jumped on them barking. He nipped at their legs and spine. Reluctantly, the animals eventually entered the narrow passage.

On the left, the dark blue water sparkled without revealing its depth. Milky ice blocks floated on the surface.

"Brrrr! It's better not to fall into this icy bath. Just thinking about it makes me shiver!" thought Indiana. At that moment, one of the dogs slipped. It clung with all its claws, couldn't stop its slide, and headed towards the dark liquid. Fortunately, it was held back by its harness. Only its hind legs plunged into the water. With great care not to fall into the water himself, Indy helped it out of this delicate position. With its tail between its legs, the animal then resumed its place.

"Phew!" sighed Indiana. "That's one thing done. Unfortunately, we still have to climb all the way up the cascade and then to the top of the cliff." After a short walk, they found themselves ready to work. The cascade, about ten meters high, with its stalactites and transparent columns, seemed to have been sculpted from glass.

"The real challenge begins," declared Indy. "I'll tie myself with the rope and climb."

"But that's impossible, Indy! You risk breaking your neck."

"Perhaps," admitted the fearless boy. "But there's no other solution. Once I reach the top, I'll throw the rope to you. You'll tie the dogs to it, and I'll pull them up one by one."

"It's pure madness! It will take hours."

"If you have a better idea, just tell me!" Indiana tied the rope around his waist. He gripped his harpoon tightly in his fist. Planting it firmly in the ice, he began his ascent. As he climbed, the ice gave way under his feet. Several times, he slipped but managed to catch himself.

Halfway up the waterfall, he stopped to catch his breath. The landscape was magnificent. The mountains around him stood out against the sky. In the distance, he spotted, on a plateau, where the Inuit village should be.

As soon as he had regained his normal breathing, he set off again. At the top of the waterfall, the ground was almost flat. He tied the end of his rope to a rock and threw the other end into the void.

"Your turn, Manu. Attach one of the dogs securely by its harness so I can pull it up."

"Okay," the young girl replied. "I'll choose the lightest one to start with."

As soon as she gave the signal, Indiana hoisted the animal. The dog, anxious, whimpered. Its paws flailed in the air around it. Indiana congratulated himself on having strong biceps.

When the pack was finally gathered, he was sweating despite the cold wind blowing more and

more violently. Now he had to hoist the sled. Quite a task! It was far too heavy for Indiana alone.
He threw the rope back to Manuminiag. She tied one end to the sled while Indy attached the pack to the other end.

"Don't stay below, it's dangerous!" The young girl stepped aside. As soon as they received the order, all the dogs braced themselves. They pulled together with all their might. The sled slowly slid up the almost vertical slope. Luckily, it didn't get caught anywhere and was soon at the top.

"Phew!" thought Indiana. "The hardest part is over. Now it's your turn, Manuminiag."
One last time, he threw the rope.

"Wrap it securely around your waist. Firmly! We can't have the knot come undone halfway up."
The ascent began. Assisted by Indiana pulling on the rope, Manuminiag climbed with ease.

"Are you okay?" Indiana asked. "You're not feeling dizzy?"

"No problem! You know, I'm used to heights. In the spring, we climb the cliffs to gather eggs."

"Very well," Indiana said calmly.
However, he was very worried. Three meters below, he could see that the worn rope was starting to give way.

I mustn't lose my composure, he thought. It's better if I don't say anything; Manuminiag might panic. There were only three meters left. The steepest ones.

"Hurry up!" he couldn't help but shout to the young girl.

"I can't go any faster. I'm slipping. Pull me up!"

"Impossible! This damn string won't hold!"

"Do something, Indy! I'm falling! Aaaah!"
Indiana secured the rope. Only a few strands remained intact where it had broken.

"Quick, hold on!" he said, tossing the end of his whip to the young girl who grabbed it.

Just in time! The last strands of the rope had just given way. Manuminiag swung from side to side. Firmly planted at the top of the waterfall, Indiana held on tight.

"Fortunately, you're barely heavier than a feather!" he exclaimed. "Otherwise, you would have dragged me down with you."

"Hurry," Manuminiag groaned. "I'm losing my grip!"

"Hang on, I'll pull you up."
Indiana summoned his last ounces of strength to pull his friend to the top. And when she was close to him, they both collapsed, panting. It took them several minutes to recover from their ordeal.

They would have deserved to rest before climbing up to the glacier. But the weather was turning. They had to leave immediately if they wanted to avoid getting caught in the fog. Every second counted.

After an hour of additional efforts, they finally reached the glacier. A freezing wind whistled and stung their faces. The two friends pulled up their fur hoods and closed their collars.

"It's getting worse!" grumbled Indiana. "The

Spirits really don't want to help us. They've thrown us into the lion's den!"

"At least, Björk didn't follow us. That's for sure!"

"You're right, Manu. I still think he'll manage to reach the Sacred Mountain when the time comes. We'll have to be very careful when crossing this horrible glacier."

Horrified by what she had just heard, Manuminiag stared at Indiana for a moment.

"Are you absolutely certain there's no other way?"

"Absolutely certain."

"Oh dear! They say that evil spirits inhabit the glacier. They're called the Timersits. They're hungry giants. They carry all sorts of cooking utensils with them and eat all living beings they encounter: bears, wolves, and even humans."

"What?" Indy shrugged. "I read about those in my father's copy of Fridtjof Nansen's book. That's a monster from a story, not real. The real danger is the crevasses. They're very deep. Whatever you do, don't fall into one; it's impossible to get out." Manuminiag buried her head in her hands.

"I don't want to go there! I don't want to be eaten by the Timersits!"

"Come on, come on! Forget about the Timersits! Calm down!"

Taking advantage of a moment when the horizon cleared, Indiana had just spotted the Mountain. From where they stood, it was across the vast expanse of ice. A cloud hung over its summit.

"That's exactly what I feared, we're forced to cross the most dangerous area."

"Are you sure there's no other way?" the young girl inquired, somewhat calmed.

"Sure and certain! There's no choice!"

Not very reassured, Indiana led the dogs onto the glacier. Kranoaq, as a good leader, led the way. Soon they were advancing amidst a maze of impressive crevasses. Some looked like chasms; others, narrower, like giant mouths ready to swallow them.

"After all," Indiana thought, "Manu isn't entirely wrong. This glacier is a sort of ogre capable of devouring humans."

The blizzard, ever stronger, howled. Shreds of fog moved in single file. It looked like a herd of ghosts that had gathered and were surrounding them little by little.

"By the hounds! If this keeps up, we won't be able to go any further!"

"Oh no! Impossible! I'll never close my eyes if we sleep here, the Timersits will come to get us!"

"Even if we sleep here, we're in trouble already. There's no need to make it worse."

"But it's the truth, Indy. The Timersits exist. My uncle Kuluk met them."

"Hmm, hmm... Let's assume that," Indy said, clearing his throat. "Let's keep going, we'll see if these Evil Spirits show themselves."

It was now around noon. Since morning, they had only eaten biscuits retrieved from the pirate's boat. Fatigue and hunger were increasing. The dogs also began to show signs of fatigue. Silent, tails

drooping, they dragged their feet. Even Kranoag didn't have as much energy anymore.
Indiana became more attentive. Occasionally, he stopped the sled and probed the snow with his harpoon to make sure it wouldn't give way. They advanced very cautiously until the fog fell completely.

It was a white, opaque fog that prevented seeing more than five meters ahead.

"We're stuck! I suspected it. The Spirits have decided to give us a hard time. Well, if we can say that, because we only see white."

"Disaster! We're lost in the middle of the white hell."

Manuminiag had curled up at the back of the sled. She trembled, both with fear and cold. Suddenly, cries rang out.

"The Timersits! What are we going to do, Indy? I'm going to die of fright!"

The eerie cries drew nearer:

"Waoooouuuhh! Waaaooouuhhhh!!!"

Terrified, Manuminiag dove under the bearskin.

Standing, whip in hand, Indiana widened his eyes. He tried to make out a shape through the mist.

The howls drew even closer.

Strangely, the dogs had their fur raised, looking worried. They had all taken shelter under the sled. Only Kranoag kept his nose in the air. His fur was puffed up, tail held high.

He seemed ready to attack:

"Waoooouuuhh!"

The cries rang out again. Just a few meters

away. This time, a silhouette appeared through the cottony fog.

Just a shape. Then the gleam of two yellow eyes.

"It's a wolf! Just a wolf!!!" Indy exclaimed.

"Amaguk!" Manuminiag yelled, her voice hoarse with fear.

The young girl had peeked over the bearskin. In her eyes, Indy read even more terror than if a winged dragon had just appeared breathing fire!

Chapter 11
The Gate of Whales

"It's a Timersit! He's disguised himself as a lone wolf so we can't guess who he really is," Manuminiag whispered in Indiana's ear. "You can't imagine how formidable he is."

"Formidable, no doubt? But I'm determined not to be intimidated!"

Driven by his anger, Indiana grabbed the handle of his whip. He puffed out his chest, raised the lash, and twirled it around. The beast approached, howling deeply. Its mouth wide open revealed an impressive row of sharp teeth. Its yellow eyes were blazing.

"You think you can scare me, but you don't frighten me! I've tamed ones more terrible than you. Ah! Ah! Ah!"

"Indy, no! Don't do it!" Manuminiag threw herself at him just as his whip was about to fall.

"Whoa! What's gotten into you? This isn't right!"

"This wolf is a Timersit. If you dare to strike him, we'll have nothing but trouble. A lot of trouble."

"What should I do then? Let him eat us alive without reacting?"

Motionless and silent, the wolf seemed to be listening to them.

"What if you tried using the wolf tooth my uncle gave you?" the young girl suggested to her friend's ear, as if afraid of being heard.

"The wolf tooth! Another absurd idea! I'm sure a good whip crack would be enough to scare off this cursed creature."

"It's not a cursed creature, Indy. It's a creature of the Spirits. We must not touch it!"

"Fine, I'll hold back the blow. But if this wolf doesn't leave, I'll use my whip..."

"Waoooouuuuuhhhh!" the wild beast howled as if responding to the threat.

And the dogs barked in return. But they all remained hidden behind the sled, except Kranoaq, who stood beside his young master.

He opened the pouch made of white rabbit fur that was tied around his neck. He took out the tooth. Just as he had done with the shark tooth, he held it tightly in the palm of his bare hand and recited the formula that Kuluk had taught him.

"Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik." A strange force enveloped him. It seemed like a wave emanating from the tooth was heading towards the animal. The wolf closed its eyes. Instead of letting out its cry, it emitted a strange sound, a kind of growl.

The tooth had become almost burning in the boy's palm. In a subdued voice, he repeated: "Qaulluqtuq Unganik Kanimmasik." The wolf lowered its back and tucked its tail where it disappeared into the mist.

"Wham!" exclaimed Indiana. "That's extraordinary! A disappearing act! Too bad I can't do the same to the blasted fog. We'll have to wait for it to clear up."

"In the meantime, we'll eat."

"Eat?! And what, please?"

"There are still two biscuits left."

"A feast! I wonder if I'll be able to swallow all that," Indy said ironically.

"Shut up and eat!" ordered the young girl, handing him half of a biscuit she had split in two. He greedily sank his teeth into it. "Hey there! Be careful! You're dropping crumbs."

"Darn it! You're right. This is not the time to lose a single crumb. Besides, it wouldn't serve any purpose. There isn't even a bird to peck at them in this frozen desert."

As he said this, a "Croak!" was heard. Curious coincidence! They both looked up. They saw nothing through the cottony fog. Another croak resounded above them. "What's that?" Indiana wondered. "Shh! Quiet and listen." "Croak! Croak! Croak!" The invisible bird seemed to be circling above them. Suddenly, the mist parted slightly.

In the gap, a strange crow with white feathers and a black beak appeared. Manuminiag threw some crumbs from her biscuit on the ground. Folding its wings, the bird dropped down and pecked at them. Manuminiag burst with joy: "It's the white crow. The great white crow. We're saved! I knew the Spirits wouldn't let us down. My uncle Kuluk must have spoken to them."

"There she goes, too tired, losing her mind," thought Indiana, sitting on the bearskin. Then he said aloud: "I would really like you to explain to me! How could a poor unfortunate bird with half its

feathers missing be of any help to us?"

"Indy, you're mistaken! This isn't just any bird! Look at it closely. Have you ever seen crows with white plumage before this one?"

"No, and so what? What does that prove?"

"Well, it proves that this isn't just any crow. It's actually the only one of its kind. It's the Spirit of the crow. Kuluk gave one of its feathers. It should be with the two teeth in the fur pouch."

"Exactly! I have that feather, and it's indeed white," Indiana said, brandishing it.

As if responding to this sign, the bird hopped in their direction.

"I'm not sure if it's a Spirit, but one thing's for certain: this poor old hungry crow is looking for something to eat."

"Indiana! You never want to trust me. Believe me for once, this bird will serve as our guide."

The bird stared at them with its round eyes. It let out another "Croak!" and flew away. It rose a little, and instead of flying off, it circled around them.

"Look," Manuminiag continued, "it's inviting us to follow."

"Fantastic! Now, it's a crow showing us the way. I must be dreaming!"

"Believe me," pleaded Manuminiag. "My uncle Kulik has already spoken to me about the white crow. It has saved him several times."

"Let's suppose," replied Indiana. "We'll follow it, and we'll see. We'll see where it leads us. I just hope it's not into a crevasse."

After an hour of walking, they had still not

left the glacier. But the fog seemed to be lifting a little. The crow still flew ahead of them, croaking as if to encourage them. Occasionally, it would fly ahead and disappear, then return to guide them with its call.

"When I tell my father and my friends about this," thought Indiana, "they won't believe me. This country is truly magical. It's freezing cold, but we encounter wise crows."

They passed by large, deep black crevasses, overlooked by immense blocks of ice as tall as houses. The terrain kept rising and the poor dogs, who hadn't eaten since the salmon on the shore, were starting to run out of strength. Some of them had lost their balance, but they always managed to regain their footing and continue without complaint. Indiana whistled to make them slow down.

"He who travels far spares his mount," is a proverb from my homeland.

"You're right, they need to rest, or they'll never make it to the end."

"These dogs are the bravest I've ever known."

When they reached the edge of the glacier, the crow flew over them one last time, croaking, and then as it disappeared the sky suddenly cleared as if by magic. Before them stood a hill formed of large blocks of stone and earth that the glacier had piled up over the centuries.

It was covered in fresh snow. Its very steep slope would be difficult to climb.

"We'll have to get off the sled and walk. Otherwise, the dogs will never make it to the top."



They disembarked. The snow was soft, sinking up to their knees.

"I hope we don't trigger an avalanche."

"Don't worry, Kranoaq is cautious. He chooses the least dangerous path."

Indeed, the dog kept going back and forth to indicate the trail to follow.

Finally, they reached the top of the hill without any trouble. The wind was stronger there. But the landscape they discovered was extraordinary.

In the distance, at the foot of a mountain, whale jaws were standing towards the sky. Carefully arranged, they formed a kind of alley.

"The Whale Gate! We're reaching our destination!"

"But then, we've succeeded."

"Not quite, but almost! Over there, begins the realm of the Spirits. You see, the Sacred Mountain is just behind. It's there, at the very top, that I must bring the Black Stone."

They remained for a long moment observing the mountain and the strange monument at its base. The jaws formed a gigantic tunnel.

"Too bad my father isn't here," said the young American, impressed by their discovery. "He has already visited many archaeological sites, but I'm sure he would have loved to see these huge jaws brought here."

He waited for his companion's response for a moment. Then he turned around. Manuminiag had disappeared. There were only her footprints in the snow, leading away.

"Where has she gone?"

"Manuminiag!!! Hey! Manu!!!"

He received no response, except from the echo "Ma-huuuu!"

Where had she gone? What strange idea had she had? Mystery...

Now night was falling. Indy, too tired, decided to patiently wait for her return.

He lay down in the sled, wrapped himself in the bear skin, and tried to sleep. But he couldn't.

Hungry and anxious, he awaited the return of the young Eskimo girl.

She didn't take long. He heard her coming.

Wrapped in her anorak, she plowed through the deep snow, which made her walk difficult.

Yet she was smiling.

Indiana guessed she was hiding something behind her back.

"What are you hiding?"

"Close your eyes. It's a surprise." Manuminiag girl's eyes sparkled mischievously. She seemed pleased with herself. Indiana obeyed.

"Can I look now?" he asked after two seconds.

"Yes, go ahead."

Slowly, he opened his eyelids. On the fur in front of him, four eggs gleamed.

Beautiful speckled eggs.

"Wow!" he exclaimed joyfully. "Where did you find these treasures?"

"Not far, behind a rock, in a snow partridge nest."

"Awesome! What a great omelette we're going to make! But no, silly me! We have nothing to cook them with. What a shame..."

"And so what's the problem? Just pierce the shell on each side and then you suck, like drinking from a gourd."

She proceeded as she had explained.

He imitated her.

And Indiana, who was too hungry to argue, imitated her.

"Indeed, with The People, cooking is quick and easy."

"The important thing is to eat when you're hungry," remarked Manuminiag.

"You're right," the boy agreed.

And, without further ado, he swallowed his other raw egg.

Chapter 12
In the Cave of Spirits

After four short hours of sleep, Indiana woke up. He had slept very poorly. Now that they were almost at their destination, he couldn't stop thinking about Björk. That bandit would surely set a trap for him to retrieve the Black Stone.

He got up and, using his binoculars, scanned the horizon.

"No, I don't see any trace. Yet, if that cursed Dane followed the normal route, he must be somewhere nearby. Caution, caution, he has more than one trick up his sleeve."

Under the bear fur in the back of the sled, Manuminiag slept soundly. He didn't dare wake her up. He had noticed that the Inuits liked to sleep for hours and hours, sometimes for a whole night and day. He guessed it has something to do with the long days and nights.

He harnessed the dogs to the sled. Hungry, tired, they were less obedient than usual. However, once they started working, they put all their heart into pulling the load. Despite the jolts of the start and the run, Manuminiag didn't even open an eye. She slept like a log.

Arriving at the Whale Gate, Indiana stopped at the first jawbone. As the sled came to a halt, Manuminiag freed herself from the fur. She turned her sleepy gaze towards Indiana.

"Good morning, sleepyhead! I was beginning to wonder if you thought you were a hibernating

bear."

"I wasn't sleeping!" protested Manuminiag.

"How so, you weren't sleeping?"

"Well, yes, I was dreaming!"

"Oh, I see, you were dreaming with your eyes closed, I understand."

In my dream, I saw my uncle Kuluk. He spoke to me.

"Your uncle, the shaman!" exclaimed Indiana. "And what did he say?"

"He said that the Spirits are starting to get impatient. That we have taken too long to bring back the stone."

"That's it! I hope you told him that we're just sightseeing. But wait, your uncle who has so much power and knows everything, he must know where Björk is right now? Did you think to ask him?"

"Um, no..." stammered the young girl, thrown off by her companion's sarcasm. "I didn't have time. My dream was over before he could inform me."

"Too bad. I would have liked to know what that scoundrel has in store for us."

"He may have given up on following us," she suggested timidly.

"I doubt it! Anyway, if he sets a trap for me, I'll defend myself," Indy said angrily, snapping his whip. "Enough joking around. First things first, I need to know where the Cave of Spirits is."

He consulted the map engraved on the shoulder blade. "It has all the necessary indications to locate the cave. By standing inside the tunnel formed by the whale jaws, one should see clearly to deter-



mine the location of a granite rock. The entrance to the cave is below."

"There it is! I see it!"

"Where?" asked Manuminiag.

"At the very top, almost at the summit of the Sacred Mountain, next to a tongue of ice."

"Oh, yes! I see it too. Well, well! We're going to have a lot of trouble climbing up there!"

Indy cut in on the young girl, "Not you, you won't have any trouble!"

"And why is that?"

"Because you're going to wait for me here, at the bottom."

"What do you mean? And for what reason?"

"You know very well. No Inuit is allowed to enter the land of the Spirits. Kuluk told you. And besides, it's better for you to wait here with the dogs." She thought to herself, Kuluk's advice about thin ice throughout that area. She followed his advice to send the white guy for the dangerous stuff. She really liked Indy but her people came first.

A pout formed on the young girl's lips. She turned around, headed towards the sled, and muttered, "Well, in that case, I'll just go back to sleep!"

A few seconds later, Indiana was gearing up. By tying the four corners of a fur together, he fashioned a rudimentary bag. He put the Black Stone inside and slung it over his shoulder. He was ready to go. Manuminiag had disappeared under the bear fur.

"Is she sleeping or sulking? No way to know. Oh well! I'm leaving without saying goodbye to her."

Indy called Kranoaq. The faithful dog would accom-

pany him.

The ascent began immediately, rather steep. It continued like this for several hundred meters. The boy struggled on the snow hardened by the frost. The higher he climbed, the more difficult his breathing became, and the harder his heart pounded.

Upon reaching the halfway point, he stopped to catch his breath. A strong wind had suddenly risen, pushing clouds and lifting snow gusts that stung his face. Indiana took shelter behind a rock and surveyed the path he still had to cover.

"It's getting more and more difficult. I wonder if I'll even be able to cross the icy part in the middle. It's like a real slide!"

The rest of his ascent was no walk in the park. After that icy slide, where any fall could be deadly, came a rocky corridor as vertical as a staircase.

"It's like mountaineering," he thought. "Except I'm not equipped. I have neither an ice axe nor crampons. If only Sisa were here, she'd probably find a less risky way to get up there."

Suddenly, a bright flash shone at the top of the cliff.

"Weird, it's like sunlight reflecting off a mirror."

There was a second flash, longer this time.

"What if they're binoculars? Maybe Björk is watching me? Unfortunately, I can't see anything from where I am."

Not very reassured, he resumed his ascent as best he could. Soon, he was in the most dangerous zone, a real ice rink. Luckily, he had brought the har-



poon tip and used it to carve steps. His progress was slow, very slow.

"At this rate, I won't be breaking any records. But at least it warms me up, better than nothing." Indeed, despite the wind and the cold, Indiana was sweating. Kranoaq, too, was panting. The dog, like his master, struggled to climb but followed closely.

They soon left the difficult sector. At the foot of the cliff, the ground became flatter. The boy took the time to turn around. Below his feet stretched a landscape of snow, ice, and rock as far as the eye could see. The aligned whale jaws looked tiny. Manuminiag was over there. Perhaps she was watching him with binoculars? Just in case, he waved his arms.

It was at that moment that Kranoaq jumped on him. Without understanding why, the boy found himself on the ground. At the same instant, a large stone block landed where he had been standing two seconds earlier. Like a bomb, it shattered into a thousand pieces. It had been a close call; the boy could have been pulverized.

Had that stone block come loose on its own, or had it been thrown from the top of the cliff? If Björk was up there, he could have thrown it. How to know? Impossible!

Trembling, Indiana got up. He carefully examined the top of the cliff but saw nothing suspicious.

"Let's not stay here any longer," he said to Kranoaq. "This place isn't very welcoming. In any case, thank you. You saved my life. Without you, I would have ended up as minced as a hamburger steak!"

The dog showed his joy by wagging his tail. After a few pats, Indiana grabbed the bag containing the Black Stone, slung it over his shoulder, and set off again. No other incidents disturbed the climb. However, Indiana remained wary. Upon arrival, he gripped the handle of his whip just in case Björk, if he was hiding somewhere, tried to surprise him. Slowly, he advanced silently and scanned the surroundings. Right, left. No one. The coast was clear. In front of him, under the rock he had spotted from below, appeared the entrance to the Cave. Carved into the rock, it was shaped like the gaping mouth of a hungry giant.

"We're finally here! Triumphed Indiana. It's about time! I'm getting tired of this story!"
For safety, he glanced around. Nothing visible. No trace. Yet, he felt uneasy. As if his sixth sense signaled danger. Unintentionally, with Kranoaq at his heels, he began the final meters that separated him from the Cave.

"I feel like someone is watching me, and yet I see no one... It could be Björk. But where is he hiding? Unless it's the Spirits spying on me..."
They reached the entrance of the Cave. Artificial light illuminated the interior. Was it a lamp? A supernatural phenomenon? To find out, he had to go see. Indiana hesitated.

"Caution! Caution!" he repeated to himself as he took his first steps into the semi-darkness. Barely had he covered three meters when he stumbled upon an obstacle. He lost his balance, fell on his buttocks, and began to slide uncontrollably. He realized, too

late, that he was on a huge ice slab. He gained speed. He spun several times like a top.

Despite his attempts to brake, it was impossible! Where was he going to land? The Black Stone had slipped away from him. In the dark, the slide seemed to last an eternity. In fact, no more than thirty seconds passed before he came to a stop on a flat surface.

He got up and felt his body. No, nothing was broken. Besides a slightly sore buttock, everything was fine. He looked around and what he saw seemed extraordinary: the ceiling of the Cave was no longer made of rocks but of a thick layer of ice forming a sort of skylight. The sunlight passing through projected a light that illuminated a long, rectangular, flat rock.

"The Table! The famous Table of the Spirits," he exclaimed, amazed. All around, the walls glistened with frost. Icicle stalactites descended from the ceiling, forming slightly iridescent crystal tubes. Every sound echoed. "This is truly the most magical place I have ever known," thought Indiana. "It feels like being in a cathedral. One wonders if all this is real." To check, he pinched his forearm.

"Ouch!"

No, he wasn't dreaming. All of this was indeed real. He had before him the famous Table of the Spirits where he had to place the Black Stone. However, he now had to find the Black Stone. After the slide, it had rolled among other stones. In the darkness, Indiana had to search for it for a good while. Finally, he found it. The boy took it in his

hands. He walked slowly, almost reverently, to the Table. As Kuluk had explained to him, he placed the Black Stone there, striking three blows that multiplied thanks to the echo. Then a ray of light struck the stone. An intense glow emanated from it, unbearable for the eyes. A strange crackling occurred, sending sparks flying. Indy quickly stepped back and threw himself to the ground. What was this extraordinary phenomenon? What would happen now? It seemed to the boy that the entire Cave was vibrating. Was this the beginning of a massive explosion? Questions raced through the intrepid adventurer's mind.

But what could he do in the face of the forces of the Spirits, except wait?

Chapter 13
Accursed Bandit!

"Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Amplified by the echoes of the Cave, a sinister chuckle forced Indy to open his eyes again. On the table, the stone had regained its black hue. He tried to make out something in the darkness surrounding him.

"So, you thought you could escape me, little squirt! But I've got you. Whether you like it or not, I'm going to get the stone. It's mine, the Spirits don't even exist and will not help you!"

No doubt, it was Björk. Where was he hiding? The echo of his voice bounced off all sides. It was impossible to tell where it was coming from.

"Show yourself, scoundrel!" Indiana shouted, brandishing his whip. "You're playing the invisible man, it doesn't scare me!"

"You don't scare me either, runt!"

Once again, the man's voice echoed from one side of the underground chamber to the other. Yet, to Indiana, it seemed to come from behind the table. On the right, on an ice wall, he thought he saw a human form emerging.

With all his strength, the boy brought down his whip. Surprise! With the sound of shattering glass, Björk's silhouette exploded into pieces.

"Missed! Ha! Ha! Ha! That was just my reflection. This Cave is like a hall of mirrors with a thousand reflections. You fell for it! But enough playing around now! Drop your whip, or else..."

A gunshot rang out. The bullet whizzed past Indiana's feet.

"You get it now, kid! I'm not joking anymore." Pointing the barrel of his gun, Björk emerged from the shadows. Slowly, Indiana dropped his whip to the ground, raising his hands in the air.
"Okay, okay, I give up," he said upon seeing what delighted him. Kranoaq was standing on a ledge above the bandit. Silent and agile like a tiger, he had slipped without being seen or heard.
Björk stepped forward into the light. His face appeared, badly scarred.

"You are very brave and clever, young American. I understood that right away. But the one who will defeat me has not yet been born. I have waited long enough to retrieve this stone!"

The man placed his hand on the stone and tried to lift it. It didn't budge.

"What does this mean? This darn stone seems fused!" The Dane grabbed it with both hands and pulled. Nothing! The stone was firmly attached to the table. Ragefully, the bandit hit it with the butt of his pistol.

"Now's the time to take advantage. He won't have time to react if I move fast," the boy calculated.

Alas! Björk had guessed his plan.

"Don't move, kid. I'm more than tired of your antics. Without you, by now, I would already be on my way to America, and rich! But you got in my way, I will get revenge."

Carried away by his anger, the bandit threatened Indy. His index finger was tense on the trigger.

He was about to shoot. Indiana dove to the ground, shouting:

"Go, Kranoaq!"

The dog leaped into the void. He fell onto the back of the bandit, who toppled forward. His weapon slipped from his hand and disappeared into a deep black hole.

Wasting no time on his victim, the animal sank his teeth into the thick cotton shirt of the Dane. The man struggled, desperately trying to get rid of the dog. The man and the beast became one. Together, they rolled to the side. One turn. Two turns. They found themselves under the Spirits' Table where Indiana could no longer see them.

The boy took the opportunity to retrieve his whip.

Under the table, the struggle was intense.

Björk's shouts mingled with the dog's growls.

"Kranoaq will surely prevail. With his powerful jaws, he won't give Björk any chance. Serves that bandit right, he asked for it!"

Unfortunately, things turned out differently. Taking advantage of a moment of respite, the Dane pulled a knife from his boot.

With one quick motion he stabbed Kranoaq in the leg.

Injured, the dog let go. The other freed himself. With a bound, he stood up. He thought he could escape, but he found himself face to face with Indiana and his whip. He quickly disappeared into the darkness. But the dog, now furious, chased after the bandit, baring his teeth.

Björk turned around. His sharp weapon gleamed in the darkness.

"Watch out!" Indiana shouted to Kranoaq.

"If that damn mutt comes closer, I'll cut him to pieces," the scoundrel sneered. "You can always have him stuffed."

"You're joking, I suppose!" Indiana retorted sharply. "It's you I'm going to turn into a scare-crow!"

With astonishing speed, the boy snapped his whip several times in succession. It sounded like a burst of a repeating firearm. With each well-aimed lash, the Dane let out a cry of pain:

"Ouch! Ouch! Ouch!"

The first time, he was struck on the wrist. The knife flew. The subsequent blows hit him all over. A veritable hailstorm rained down on him. Trying to shield his head with his arms, he futilely attempted to protect himself.

"So, feeling less cocky now, you scoundrel?" The Dane, still arrogant, attempted to move for-ward to show he wasn't afraid. But this only fueled Indiana's anger, and he lashed out with his whip even harder. Panicked, the man pivoted on his heels. Howling in frustration, he retreated into the depths of the cave.

"Go to hell!" yelled Indiana. "Let that be a lesson to you."

Pursued by Kranoaq, the Dane then launched into a desperate flight. Indiana listened attentively to the sounds of the chase. Furious, the dog allowed the man no respite. His jaws snapped. He was deter-

mined to exact revenge.

After a while, they reappeared in the light. Indiana saw the Dane emerge. One leg of his pants was missing, and a piece of fabric from his thick tunic hung pitifully.

Amused, the boy savored the scene. Björk did not seem to appreciate it. He sought a way to escape the ravaging jaws. A three-meter-high rock offered him an unexpected refuge. It was steep and smooth. But as if wings had sprouted on his back, he climbed effortlessly while Kranoaq ripped the second leg of his pants.

At the top, the Dane cursed in his unknown language. Indy approached the foot of the rock. Björk glared fiercely at him from his perch.

"Well done, bandit! You're a true climbing champion! And you, Kranoaq, I commend you; you truly have a talent for tailoring, you've made our friend a pair of shorts."

"That's right, act tough, kid. I'm warning you, you'll pay for this!"

"You'd better buy yourself a new pair of pants!" Indiana retorted. "Because here, in this cold, wearing shorts isn't advisable."

"Grrrr!" the bandit growled.

"Grrrr!" Kranoaq echoed.

"Listen to me, Björk. I'll give you one chance. Now that my mission is accomplished, I'm going back to the village and taking a boat to America. If you agree, we'll go back together. I won't say anything about what happened."

"Out of the question!"

"Very well," replied the boy. "Since that's the case, I'll release your dogs. You'll have to make your own way back on foot."

"Do as you please! I came for that Black Stone, and I won't leave without it, even if I have to crawl to retrieve it!"

"Very well, suit yourself. But be warned, if you attack us again, you'll find me standing in your way!"

From atop his rock, the man glared down at Indiana with a malevolent expression.

"Goodbye, scoundrel," said Indiana. "I hope never to see you again."

Björk muttered something that Indy didn't catch. Already, he was thinking about all the efforts he still had to make: descending to the Whale Gate and then sledging for two to three days to get back to the village. Just thinking about it made him feel exhausted.

One last time, he observed the Black Stone on the table and the rock at the top where Björk was perched. Then he left. The exit was only a few meters away when Indiana realized that the dog hadn't followed him. He called out:

"Kranoaq... Kranoaq..."

An echo responded, followed by some worrying whimpers. Immediately, the boy turned around and descended as fast as he could. He found the animal halfway down. Lying on its side, it was licking its thigh. Indiana rushed over and leaned down to examine it. It was then that he realized the severity of the wound caused by Björk's knife. The dog's paw

was bleeding profusely.

"My poor Kranoaq, you're exhausted. And I didn't even notice!"

In the dog's eyes, the boy read great distress.

"I'm going to carry you in my arms."

The animal allowed itself to be picked up obediently.

"Fortunately, you're not as heavy as one might think!"

The dog's weight was still considerable. Indiana had to stop several times before reaching the exit. He was unbalanced by the burden. His feet stumbled over protruding stones, slipping in places on icy patches.

"Phew! I'm glad I made it," he sighed, gently placing the dog on the ground.

In the daylight, he examined the wound.

"Now, for a tight bandage."

A strip of fabric cut from his undershirt served as a bandage. The beast allowed itself to be treated without protesting. Yet it seemed to be in pain.

"You're brave. There, very good, that's it..."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Scoundrel! So, you're playing nurse now?"

Björk! It was that damned Björk's voice!

Indy tensed. How could he have forgotten about that scoundrel? His eyes fell on the handle of his whip lying nearby.

The Dane guessed his intention.

"Don't move! Or I'll put a hole in you!"

So this scoundrel had found his pistol again.

"This is really too stupid," thought Indy. "I fell for it like a beginner!"

"Hands up," ordered Björk.

Indiana obeyed without question. Behind him, the bandit advanced towards him. A big boot landed on the whip.

"And this time, I was smarter than you, kid. You can turn around now."

The crouching boy calmly turned around. He first saw the bandit's bare calves, reddened by the cold, then his torn pant legs, the flaps of his torn jacket, his fearsome face. But above all, he saw his hands. They were not holding a weapon!

"Argh! I fell for it twice in a row!" exclaimed the young adventurer, furious.

"You thought I was armed. Ha! Ha!"

The triumphant Dane laughed heartily.

"This time luck has turned..."

Chapter 14
The Spirits' Revenge

"Now, what do you plan to do with me?" Indiana asked Björk, who was tying him up with the lash of his whip. "I warn you in advance: if I don't return to the village, my friend Adolphus and the shaman Kuluk will come looking for me. They know where I am, and they know your evil intentions. You won't be able to escape them."

"Mind your own business! I don't need your advice! And your friends don't scare me! The only thing I'm interested in is the stone. Once I have it back I'll be so rich that no one will dare touch me. I'll be able to afford whatever I desire. It will be the good life!

"I doubt it! This stone will bring you misfortune if you steal it. You'll be cursed forever."

"Shut up, you filthy kid. I don't believe in that nonsense..."

The man finished tying Indy securely. He began to search him.

"Well, well. A harpoon tip? It'll be useful for detaching the stone."

Despite being tightly bound, Indiana struggled.

"Don't touch that! It's a gift I was given, and I value it!"

Seeing Indy in a bad situation, Kranoaq growled. He got up with difficulty.

With the last of his strength, he tried to bite the bandit. But the bandit gave him a nasty kick, and he fell back, half dazed.



"You brute!" shouted Indiana. "You have no right!"

"I have every right! Ha! Ha! Ha! Even the right to leave you here, all alone in the middle of the rocks and snow. At least you'll be able to have a nice chat with the Spirits. And I'll finally be rid of you."

"Fine!"

"Sorry, it's the law of the jungle. And now, farewell, I'm going back to get my stone."

"Go on! Good riddance!"

The man didn't reply. He turned on his heels and headed towards the Cave.

"What a disaster," Indy ruminated. "This bandit is going to steal the stone. And I'll end up starving and freezing. Oh no, truly, I've gotten myself into a mess!"

How could he free himself? Cut his bonds by rubbing them on a rocky edge? It was out of the question; the whip's lash was far too resilient. Suddenly, the blizzard brought him voices. He listened intently. Wasn't it a distant call? Yes, someone was calling:

"Indiana! Indiana!"

"Hey! I'm here!"

The boy shouted at the top of his lungs. The gusts of wind gave him the answer he was hoping for. His heart leaped with joy. It was Manuminiag's voice. The young girl had dared to defy the law of the Spirits to come to his rescue.

"Hey, Manu! I'm here!"

Soon, Manuminiag appeared. Despite the cold, she had opened her parka and pulled back her

fur-trimmed hood. Her breathing was labored. Very tired, she walked painfully, leaning on a whale rib that served as a cane. Seeing Indiana leaning against a snowdrift, she exclaimed:

"I finally found you! I've been calling for almost an hour. Why weren't you answering?"

"Excuse me," replied the boy, showing his ankles and wrists tied up. "I had a little problem. I got tangled up in the lash of my whip."

Manuminiag grimaced.

"What does that mean? Were you attacked by an Evil Spirit?"

"Exactly."

"You see," she triumphed. "You didn't want to believe me, but one must be very wary of Evil Spirits."

"Especially when it's named Björk!"

"What do you mean, Björk?"

"Yes, the Evil Spirit that attacked me was that Danish bandit."

"And where is he now?"

"In there."

Upon hearing Manuminiag's voice, Kranoaq raised his head. He even found the strength to stand up.

"Why is he injured? What happened to him? Is it that scoundrel who...?"

"Stop asking questions and untie me!" protested Indiana as he squirmed.

"Untie you? I'm not sure if I should! You might still cause trouble!"

"Manu, please!" pleaded his friend. "I appre-

ciate your humor, but untie me quickly. The Dane went back into the Cave to steal the stone. We need to be ready to surprise him when he comes out."

The young girl frowned as she realized the seriousness of the situation. Undoing the Dane's knots wasn't easy, as a sailor he knew what he was doing. Especially since Indiana had tightened them by struggling. To succeed, Manuminiag had to use her teeth.

Finally, Indiana was free.

"Thank you, miss. A thousand times thank you."

Manuminiag blushed. She pulled up the hood of her parka and hid behind it.

"And now, what do we do?" she asked.

"It's simple. We'll hide ourselves at the entrance of the Cave and we'll ambush him as soon as he comes out."

"And if he escapes through another exit?"

"Good grief! That's true," exclaimed Indy. "I hadn't thought of that. Come, follow me quietly. I want to make sure he's still inside."

Together, they hurried to the entrance of the Cave as fast as they could. There, repeated sounds of impact reached them.

"Phew," sighed Indy. "He's still there. He's trying to detach the stone, shouting incomprehensible words."

"You're lucky not to understand. He's a rude fellow, he keeps swearing."

"What do you mean? Do you understand what he's saying?"

"Of course, since I speak Danish."

"Well, well! You're quite knowledgeable."

"Oh no! I speak Danish very poorly. It was the missionary who taught me. I don't like the language."

Deep inside the Cave, the Dane was raging. He was hitting the stone, and the blows as well as his shouts were amplified by the echo.

Indiana and Manuminiag took up positions in ambush, behind a boulder at the edge of the path. As soon as the Dane emerged with his loot, they would pounce on him by surprise.

"Indy," suddenly exclaimed Manuminiag, worried. "Didn't you feel anything?"

Indiana sniffed.

"No, nothing at all. Why? Is Björk cooking himself a steak?"

"You're silly! I'm not talking about smelling with your nose."

"Then what?"

"Didn't you feel the ground move?"

"But yes, you're right. There was like a tremor."

"Quick, we have to flee this Cave. It's going to collapse. It's the anger of the Spirits!"

A third tremor occurred, more intense than the previous ones. Some stones detached from the vault and rolled down the slope.

Björk must have similarly realized that the cave was at risk of collapsing at any moment. His blows and shouts became even more violent.

Indy and Manuminiag rushed towards the

exit.

They ran about ten meters towards Kranoaq who was waiting for them. And there, to their surprise, was Kuluk.

The shaman paid no attention to them.

Deeply focused, barefoot in the snow, he circled around a pile of rocks he had stacked.

"Kuluk!" exclaimed Indy. "What are you doing...?"

"Shh!" interrupted Manuminiag. "We mustn't disturb him during the Dance of the Spirits."

"The Dance of the Spirits?" exclaimed the boy. "What is that?"

"Through this ceremony, the shamans communicate with the Spirits. They can obtain things they ask for, like rain or sunshine. But for that, one must be a great shaman. There also need to be very good reasons. Otherwise, the Spirits won't listen." Kuluk now stomped the ground faster and faster around the pile of balanced rocks. The cold and the altitude seemed not to bother him. His closed single eye and his sculpted face showed no expression. From his closed mouth came a deep moan.

With each step, he lifted his knees very high, then his heels fell heavily. Then, the pile of rocks trembled. One of them even came loose. It rolled. There was then a huge noise. It came from the cave. At the same time as the rock on the pile, a large block weighing several hundred kilograms had come loose.

Indiana turned around, astonished.

"Incredible," he thought. "It's as if the fall

of the block into the Cave was linked to that of the rock on the pile."

Driven by frenzy, Manuminiaq's uncle now twisted in all directions. He hit the ground very hard with his heels. The pile of rocks trembled; it was about to disintegrate.

At the same time, a rumble rose from the Cave, and even deeper: from the belly of the mountain. It sounded like an immense house of cards ready to collapse.

"The Spirits are in a furious rage," whispered Manuminiag. "They're going to swallow Björk."

"Well, I wish them a good appetite! I wouldn't want to taste that bandit. I'm sure he's not good at all!"

Several rocks fell from the pile.

Several blocks came loose from the Cave.

The huge rock mouth spat out dust.

Kuluk's forehead was dripping with sweat. He made one last round of what remained of the pile, and the last two rocks lost their balance. Then, the whole ground rumbled deeply. From the Cave came ominous creaks. Then one last, much more powerful than the others, which echoed for a long time like a drum roll. The Cave was collapsing.

Exhausted, sweating, the shaman fell to the ground.

Crouching, Indiana and Manuminiaq hugged each other. A cloud of dust enveloped them. Suddenly, a figure sprang out.

Manuminiaq, who was the first to see her, pointed her finger:

"Look over there, Indy."

"It's Björk!" exclaimed the boy, leaping after him. "This scoundrel has once again managed to get away."

He didn't have to run long to catch up with the Dane, who was limping. He must have been injured by the fall of a stone. And in what condition he was! Covered in soot, full of scratches, he looked like he came back from hell.

"Halt there!" said the boy.

The Dane did not immediately obey. He turned his head and cast a hateful look towards his enemy.

"Stop!" ordered the boy again, snapping the whip lash near Björk's ears.

Exhausted, Björk took a few more steps forward, then collapsed to the ground, burying his head in his hands.

"You wretched brat! Because of you, I couldn't seize the stone. Sooner or later, I'll get my revenge!"

"Shut up! I don't want to hear from you anymore. Nor see you."

"I won't leave until I've retrieved my sled and my dogs."

"No way! Earlier, you said you could crawl back with the stone. So you can walk now! It's at least a week's journey to the village!" moaned the scoundrel. "I'll never make it."

"That'll give you time to think."

"But that's criminal!"

"How so? You, who injured my dog, call me a criminal! No more arguing. Get out!"

"If I feel like it!" the Dane retorted in a final burst of pride.

"But he still wants to taste my whip!" exclaimed Indy, brandishing his weapon over the bandit's head.

The latter shielded himself with his arms and pleaded, "No! Please! I'm covered in wounds, that's enough."

"Fine. Go on."

With great difficulty, Björk straightened up. He looked at the slope, then at the distant valley. Slowly, very slowly, he lifted one foot and placed it in the snow. It was already a first step. Many more would be needed before he reached his goal...
Indiana watched him until he disappeared. Then, he returned to Manuminiag. The young girl, seated cross-legged on a large rock, smiled at him. Beside her, her exhausted uncle slept. Kranoaq, curled up in a ball, opened one eye briefly before closing it with a sigh.

"Well done," said Manuminiag. "You tamed that Dane. We're not likely to see him again."
"I hope not! If he ever dares to show up again, I won't be so lenient!"

Together, they turned towards what remained of the Cave. The entrance was gone. It was now just intertwined blocks of stone and ice. Apart from a little dust, there was nothing left.
Besides the gusts of wind, the mountain was calm, almost silent.

"The Spirits have reclaimed the stone, they are now appeased," observed Indiana.

"Yes, everything ends well. I'm glad; you were really brave."

"You too," replied Indiana, wrapping his arm around the shoulders of the Manuminiag. "And Kranoaq as well. But I'm very worried about him. He's in bad shape, poor dog."

"Don't worry, little boy. He'll pull through." Kuluk had partially opened his eyelids. In a monotone voice, he spoke, "Kranoaq is a very resilient dog. His father was a wolf. We'll take him back to the village. There, he'll quickly regain his strength!"

Chapter 15
Back at the Port

With Kuluk as their guide, the return journey went smoothly. Upon their arrival in the village, Adolphus Frederick Shaterton was waiting for them, along with all the villagers.

They were greeted with cheers. The following evening, a feast was organized that lasted all night and continued into the next day.

Indiana was asked several times to recount his adventure, and the boy told several times how he traveled under the sea, encountered a bear and pirates, how the white raven guided him to the Whale Gate, and then his struggle against Björk in the Cave of Spirits. Manuminiag translated. The boy provided as much detail as possible. Sometimes, if he didn't remember very well, he invented. No one ever seemed to get bored. They listened attentively, never getting tired. His adventure was already a legend.

Three days later, the boat that was to take the hero back to America had dropped anchor in the bay. It was ready to depart. The next one would not pass for another three months, just before the formation of the ice sheet.

Everyone was gathered at the port: Adolphus, Kuluk, Manuminiag, and the other members of the Inuit community. Everyone was there except... Indiana!

"What is he doing? Where could he have gone?" Adolphus fumed, pacing back and forth on the shore.

The sailors had already taken their places on the boat that would take them to the ship. One of them declared, "We can't wait much longer. The captain wants to take advantage of the high tide to set sail."

"Please wait a little longer," pleaded Adolphus, wringing his hands. "Indiana absolutely must leave with you. Otherwise, he'll have to spend the whole summer here, and that's impossible."

"I'll give you five minutes," said the sailor. "No more. Otherwise, the captain will be furious." Adolphus tugged at his goatee. With long strides, he began to pace in circles like a bear in a cage.

"Damn it!" he muttered. "This boy is impossible! What kind of absurd idea has he come up with now?"

"I think I know where he is," Manuminiag ventured timidly.

"What!?" roared the American scholar, furious. "Why didn't you say so earlier? And where is he hiding? What is he doing?"

"He's saying goodbye to Kranoaq."

"My God! I should have known! All because of that dog!"

Furious, the little man gestured wildly like a puppet. Amused, the Inuits displayed mocking smiles.

"We must be dreaming! If he makes me search for him, I'll kick his behind!"

"No need for that, Adolphus! Here I am," the boy exclaimed, emerging from behind the group. A mischievous smile lit up his face framed by long

strands of hair. He placed his bag at the old man's feet, adjusted his hat, and zipped up his jacket. Instead of calming down, Adolphus became even more enraged:

"You're insufferable, Junior! The boat was almost leaving without you. You didn't forget anything, I hope?"

"Nothing at all," Indiana replied. "I even brought the lice brush." The boy brandished the duster used to get rid of lice. "Actually, I'll give it to you as a gift. It will surely be more useful to you than to me."

"Grrr! You're still teasing me," growled the scholar. "I don't like it!"

"I didn't know it was up for grabs. And how much does it cost?"

"That's enough!" Adolphus choked. "Stop being witty. You have one minute left to say your goodbyes."

"However, I'm quite familiar with the Spirits. But I feel you'll be relieved to see me go."

"Oh yes indeed," Shaterton sighed, as Kuluk stepped out of the group of men. The shaman stood in front of Indy and, after a brief silence, uttered a few words.
The other Inuits echoed his words.

"What did they say?" Indiana asked, turning to Manuminiag.

The young girl, visibly moved, translated "The Spirits will never forget you. And neither will we."

"I won't forget you either," Indiana said. "I will always cherish wonderful memories of your

marvelous country," he added, pointing to the pouch made of white rabbit fur hanging around his neck.

He wanted to joke, but the words wouldn't come. He felt a lump in his throat at the thought of leaving behind a beloved friend and dog.

"Come on! Enough talking! The boat is waiting for you, Indiana!" The boy waved goodbye to the village once more. Soon, only Manuminiag remained to embrace. They fell into each other's arms without saying anything.

At that moment, a horn sounded.

"On board!" the boat's captain called out to his men.

"Sorry, but we have to go now," the sailor declared.

"Quickly!" Adolphus ordered, seizing the boy's bag.

"Coming! Coming!" Indiana replied, turning abruptly.

He had tears in his eyes and didn't want to show them. Just as he was about to bid farewell to Adolphus, three young puppies emerged from among the legs of the Inuit. One of them looked very much like Kranoaq. It had the same pattern in the shape of glasses around its eyes. Indiana picked it up in his arms.

The animal gave him affectionate licks.

"I'd take you with me in my luggage, little dog."

"Impossible," the scholar replied, "those dogs need the open air life, the cold, and the snow."

"True. For once, we agree, my dear Adol-

phus."

Sadly, Indy put the puppy back on the ground. The little ball of fur then headed towards Manuminiag. The girl took it in her arms and announced:

"It's Kranoaq's son, I'm going to adopt him."

"I'm sure you'll take good care of him," added Indiana, who had just boarded the boat.

"With me, he won't lack anything. He's very lucky; I wish I could be in his place!" shouted the boy to cover the sound of the waves.

The boat was already moving away. Manuminiag cupped her hands around her mouth:

"I just had an idea!" she shouted. "I'll name him Indiana."

Translator's Notes:

I have long wondered if legal rules made Hachette make a certain percentage of authors French if they wanted to publish the Young Indiana Jones novels in French. Canadian Radio has rules for playing Canadian musicians for example. This my guess at an origin story for the French-only "Indiana Jones Jr." novels. At the time of this writing they are all out-of print by decades. This translation is part of a wider effort to visualize all of Indiana Jones' travel. These novels are often omitted from timelines of Indiana Jones because of the lack of translations. I hate to speak for anyone, but I am guessing few people at the Disney company would want to publish this in a close translation. I also know there are many completists who want to read the whole Indiana Jones story.

The writer of this book relied heavily on Fridtjof Nansen 1896 book *Eskimo Life*. Nansen was one of the first Europeans to cross Greenland. Nansen's text can be thoughful, he woefully reflects on the destructive influence of the gun on Inuit culture and hunting practices. But it also was written in 1896. The other interesting thing about this story is that Indiana cleary talks about his dog as if it is alive. In the original French text in the previous French-only novel the dog is dead. The novel *The L'Radioactive Ampoule* is set a few months before this and Indiana's father refers to the dog as dead. I chnaged that in my English translation of *The L'Radioactive Ampoule* (re-titled *Young Indiana Jones and Dr. Curie's Lost Vial*) to Indy's dad joking with him about

a near-death experience. The other interesting thing about this story is that it takes place over weeks, meaning Indiana Jones was not in school for around six weeks sometime in February or March 1913.

The only real notable interaction with other Indiana Jones lore is that this is set about eleven months after Indiana Jones was on the Titanic when it sunk. That mention was not in the original text, but him being among icebergs again seemed relevant. I also added that Dr. Jones is reading Nansen's book in my translation of the previous book chronologically.

The "gross-out food" tropes you might encounter in various forms in Indiana Jones media do not play well here. Putting aside racial sensitivities, I have had friends who were born around the same time as Indiana Jones and from the New Jersey region. They describe fat sandwiches in bars being common. Bread with animal fat. That's it. So Indiana Jones is supposed to be grossed out by Inuits eating animal fat? Why? He has been to China, Inuit food would not phase him.

The first time I personally went to China I had not eaten in hours, I was totally exhausted, and the people helping me took me to a restaurant and ordered a serving of pickled jellyfish. I have had goose feet in Wuhan and barbecued duck tongue in Nanjing. I have loved every bit of traditional Chinese food put in front of me. I smartened up Indiana Jones's attitudes towards what is seeing and did my best to recontextualize certain situations.

Indiana Jones' rival Belloq's home is Castle

Malevil. Its origins are the 1975 novel by Robert Merle and Derek Coltman and 1981 movie *Malevil*. I decided to have the Inuits in this story represent some of the first researchers from the Qallunaat Studies Institute from the movie *Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny* as a tribute to this brilliant Inuit film you should watch and purchase for home viewing. It might not be obvious on first read, but you will notice that in my translation the Inuits are actually the researchers and Adolphus is their research study subject. My honest goal of this translation was to make an Inuit person laugh if they read it.

The irony of a book about a hero who loves languages using language so inartfully inspired me to try and flip this book. When Indiana Jones chants the magic spell in this book I did my best for the spell to mean "White Savior Complex" in the Inuit language. The area where only white men can go and is forbidden to Inuits is forbidden because the ice is thin. Imagine if all the Inuits got together to roast Indiana as a prank. The tribe chants "Wet Fart Smell" to send Indiana off on his adventure. Hopefully someone who translates the Kalaallisut back into English will laugh. The intent was to subvert traditional colonialist, white-savior narrative.

The original text used the term "Eskimo" throughout. In my translation it is only used when a white person (who is not Indiana Jones) talks. I changed the tone of the text to Indiana learning and understanding. If you want the original please purchase a copy and use Google Translate.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE VERTE

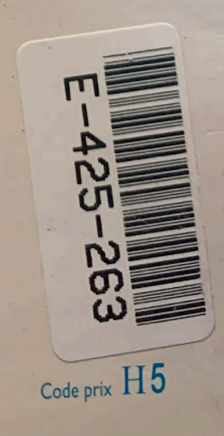
INDIANA JONES™ Jr
ET LA MÉTÉORITE SACRÉE

Richard Beugné
Illustration : Érik Juszezak

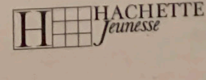


Pour apaiser les Esprits de la banquise, Indiana doit porter la Pierre noire jusqu'à la Montagne Sacrée... Lourde responsabilité, d'autant qu'un chasseur de renards bleus est prêt à tout pour lui dérober la précieuse météorite !

Entre glaciers et cascade gelée, Indy va connaître l'enfer blanc...


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